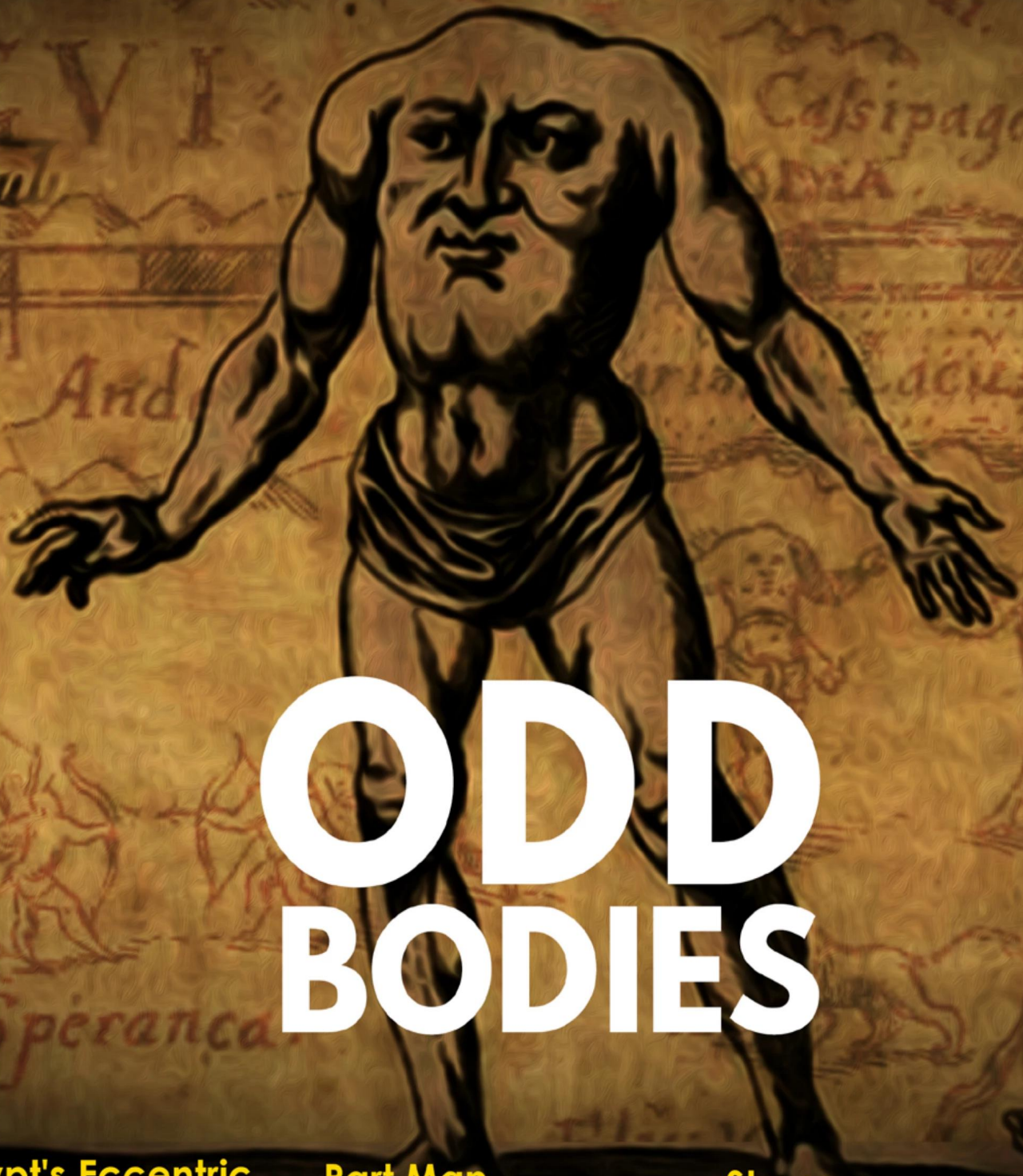




ANCIENT ORIGINS[®]

MAGAZINE

HISTORY | MYSTERY | SCIENCE



ODD BODIES

Egypt's Eccentric Pharaoh

Part Man, Part Beast

Strange Body Parts

PLUS Did a
Lost Roman
Legion End up
in China?

The Unusual Body
of Akhenaten

Therianthropes
Through Time

Horse Hooves
& Dagger Hands

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In faintly preserved Paleolithic rock etchings made by early humans, in the lines of millennia-old historical texts, and among intricate illustrations of medieval manuscripts, we find displays and descriptions of all manner of strange and astonishing people, both real and unreal. The archaeological record also yields its fair share of ‘odd bodies’ – abnormally elongated skulls, gem-encrusted teeth, bizarre hybrid burials that combine animals and humans into grotesque beasts reminiscent of the mythological chimeras of ancient cultures, and surprising artificial body parts, including peg legs with horse hooves, and a warrior knight with a dagger hand!

In this issue, we take you on a journey through the weird and wonderful world of odd bodies, odd burials, and odd people. Some are purely mythological, like the part-human, part-animal therianthropes and headless Blemmyes of medieval folklore; some are unexplained, like the stigmatics that bear the marks and wounds of Christ’s crucifixion; and others are rooted in reality. Yes, wearing dead man dentures and stretching one’s head into alien-like contortions were once in fashion!

When it comes to strange bodies of the ancient world, there is perhaps none as perplexing as that of the Pharaoh Akhenaten, ruler of Egypt’s prosperous 18th Dynasty. Represented in numerous art pieces, Akhenaten’s slender neck, long face with sharp chin, narrow, almond-shaped eyes, spindly arms, rounded thighs and buttocks, and drooping belly, have long puzzled scholars – were his features genetic or aesthetic? Guest contributor Jonathon Perrin offers a new explanation that may solve the riddle.

Finally, a brief introduction. We are pleased to announce the addition of a new, regular column – *Origins Rising* – brought to us by J. Douglas Kenyon, who was author, editor, and publisher of Atlantis Rising Magazine for over 25 years. Doug takes a fresh look at modern headlines with an ancient twist.■



JOANNA GILLAN

Chief Editor, Ancient Origins Magazine

EXPERTS IN THIS ISSUE...



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Neil Rushton is an archaeologist and author with special interest in mythological and folkloric tales. He completed his PhD at Trinity College, University of Cambridge.



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|| By Micki Pistorius

Mary Rose Shipwreck Reveals Secrets of Chainmail

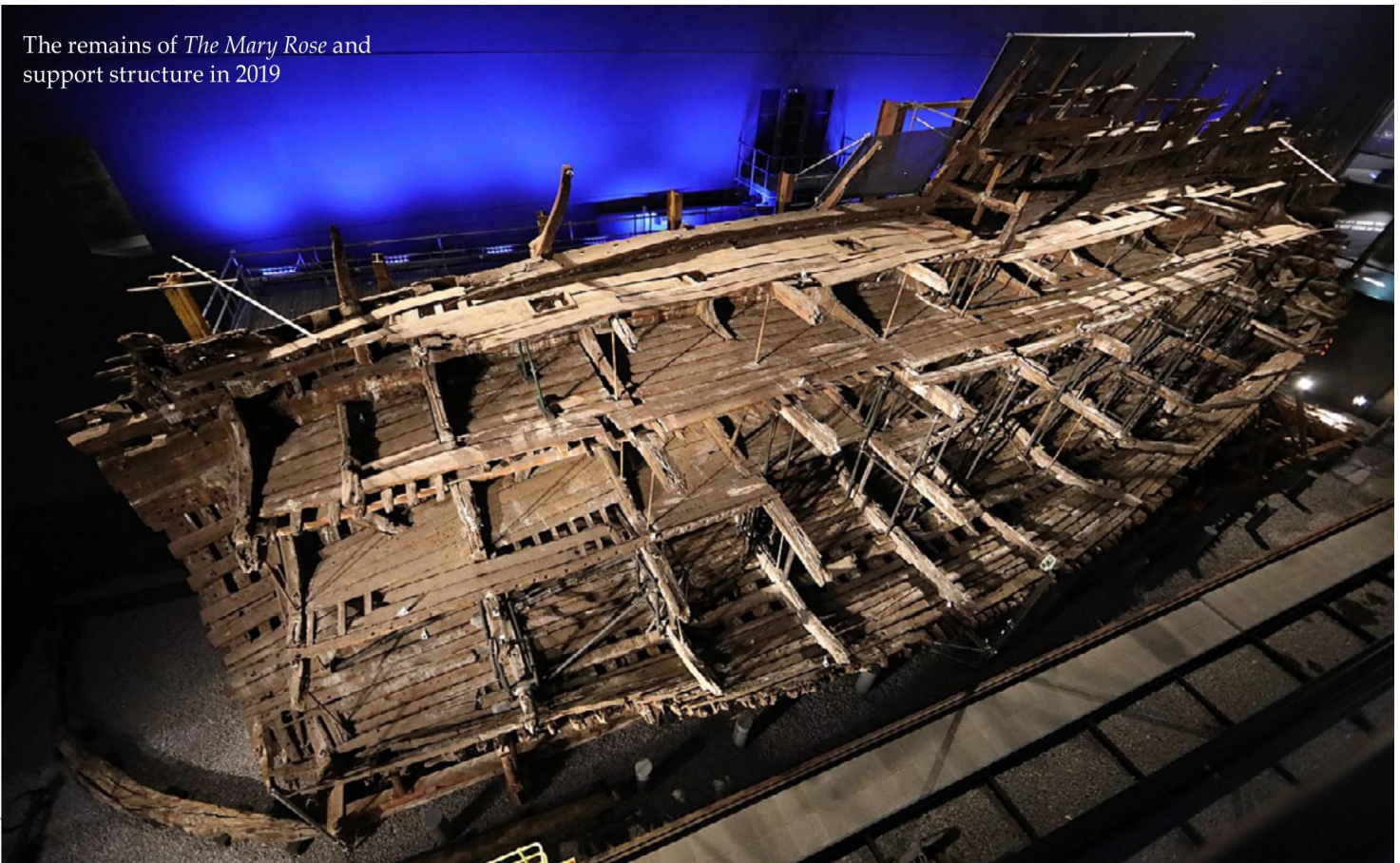
One of history's most famous shipwrecks, *The Mary Rose*, built on the orders of King Henry VIII, has yielded yet another secret. Researchers used the latest x-ray technology to examine three pieces of metal from a suit of chainmail. They had been retrieved from *The Mary Rose*, which sunk in 1545 AD during a battle with a French fleet.

An analysis of the surface chemistry of the metal chainmail links revealed they were a brass alloy consisting of 73% copper and 27% zinc. The metal was produced using very sophisticated techniques and demonstrates the high level of skills possessed by the Tudor armorers.

The investigation revealed a high level of lead and gold

on the chainmail links. This could have been transferred in workshops or as a result of pollution, after the bombing of Portsmouth Dockyard during World War II. There is the possibility that the heavy metals came into contact with a sheet of chainmail during a battle, possibly during the sea-fight that resulted in the sinking of *The Mary Rose* vessel.

The remains of *The Mary Rose* and support structure in 2019





Left: Examples of artificially modified skulls at the cemetery of Mözs.

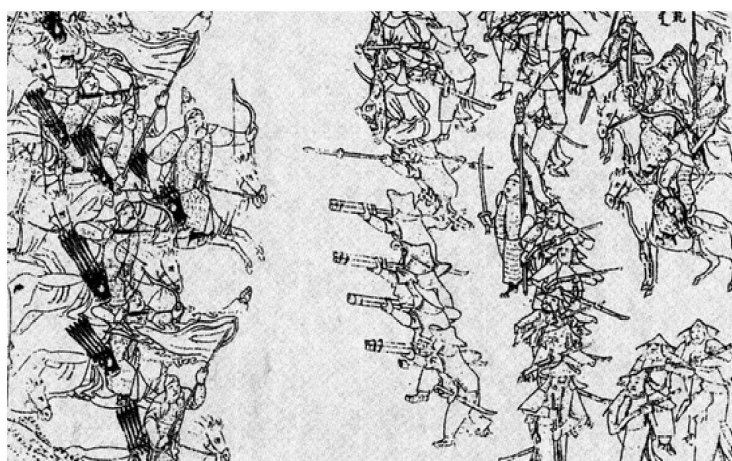
Below: The Manchu cavalry charging Ming infantry in the battle of Sarhu in 1619

Deformed Skulls Speak of Chaos After Fall of Rome

Researchers studying deformed skulls from a fifth-century cemetery, in the Pannonia region of Hungary, reported a multicultural transition between locals and migrant Romans. The Mözs-Icsei dűlő cemetery was created at the beginning of Europe's Migration Period, when the Huns invaded Central Europe forcing the Romans to retreat from modern-day Western Hungary.

An examination of the burials revealed a diverse ancient community consisting of two or three generations of three distinctly different cultural groups. The first was the founding group, buried in brick-lined Roman graves; the second was 12 foreigners who arrived about a decade after the founders, and the third was blended Roman and various foreign traditions.

Researchers believe the second group of 12 foreigners established the ritual of cranial deformation, which was found in 51 skeletons, including children. The cemetery represents one of the largest concentrations of this ancient aesthetic cultural phenomenon; a practice that was generally reserved for societal elites.



10,000+ Rare Relics Unearthed From Ming Battlefield

On a Ming battlefield, located in the Minjiang River, Meishan City, Chinese archaeologists unearthed over 10,000 artifacts, including a rare gold imperial seal that possibly belonged to the heir apparent of an emperor of China. The seal dates from a turbulent period in the history of China, which saw the fall of the Ming and the rise of the Qing Dynasty.

According to Liu Zhiyan, the lead archaeologist, the seal is made of 95% pure gold and engraved with the characters 'Shi Shu Zi Bao', meaning treasure of the Shu Prince. The unidentified prince was a member of the powerful Ming Dynasty, (1368 to 1644 AD) who expelled the Mongols.

It is believed that the imperial seal was lost during a peasant rebellion at the fall of the Ming Empire. It came into the possession of Zhang Xianzhong, the leader of a peasant army. Xianzhong proclaimed himself emperor but was forced by the invading Manchus to flee from the city of Chengdu in 1646. He was ambushed on the River Minjiang by general Yang Zhan, where he lost an armada of ships and his entire treasure, including the seal. The Manchus established a new dynasty known as the Qing, and they ruled China until 1912. ■

ORIGINS RISING



J. DOUGLAS KENYON

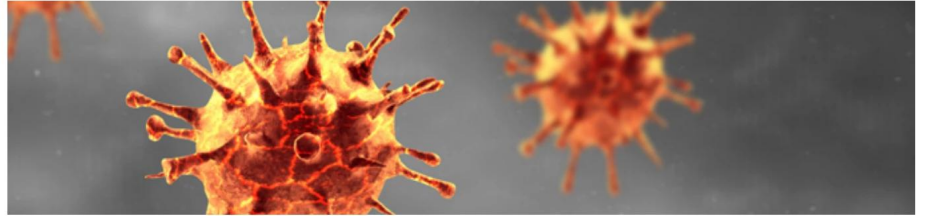
For a quarter century, J. Douglas Kenyon was editor and publisher of *Atlantis Rising Magazine*. For more information visit the web site AtlantisRising.com

With all the talk about the “unprecedented” nature of the coronavirus pandemic, maybe it is worth remembering some prior encounters civilization has had with

catastrophically infectious disease. Even though mainstream medicine today reserves the term “plague” for a specific disease (i.e., Bubonic) it includes, broadly speaking, any rapidly spreading contagion that kills many people. It is now clear that—advanced or not—our civilization is experiencing a time of ‘plague,’ but it is certainly not the first time. Just over a century ago, the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918 killed over 50 million, including this writer’s own grandparents, but our planet’s ghastly history of such catastrophes goes back for thousands of years.

In 430 BC, the “Great Plague of Athens” killed an estimated 100,000, including the great statesman Pericles, his wife, and sons. Today most historians think that event set the stage for the ultimate defeat of Athens in its war with Sparta. The epidemic was probably typhus or typhoid, but a much greater threat was

THE VIRAL NOSTRADAMUS



not to emerge for a thousand years. When it finally did rear its ugly head, the Bubonic Plague would ravage the civilized world for yet another millennium.

In the first of three great and terrifying episodes, *Yersinia pestis* (Bubonic Plague) began in Constantinople in 541 AD as the “Plague of Justinian,” where, before running its course, it killed an estimated 30 to 50 million, or about half of Earth’s human inhabitants. In 1347, it returned as the “Black Death,” and, in just four years, killed 200 million, or about a quarter of the population of Europe. Three centuries later (1665 AD), in the final bubonic episode, the “Great Plague of London” killed about 100,000, or 20 percent of the city’s population.

Ironically, in the middle of the 16th century in the depths of the Black Death in France,

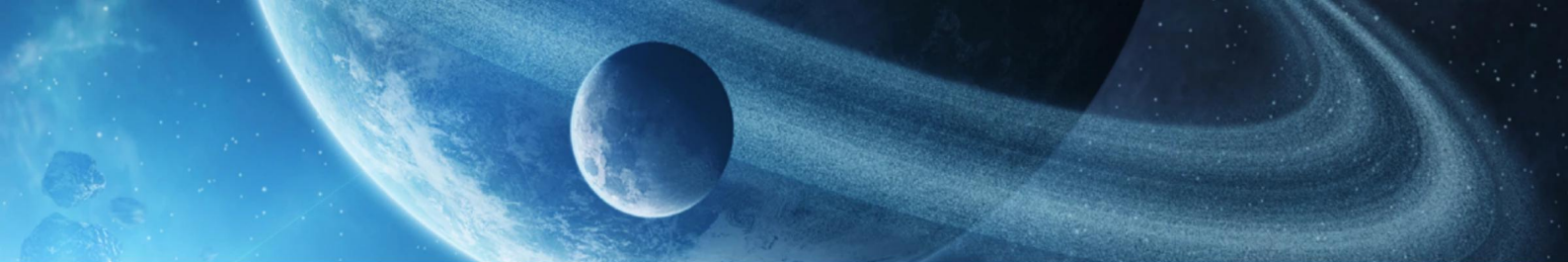
an enlightened physician was fighting back, saving many lives with what biographer John

Hogue called “a mixture of cleanliness and vitamin C (rose pills).” Posterity would recall with little interest the heroic healing contributions to the time by Dr. Michel de Nostradamus. He is remembered instead, mostly for his many obscure and complex prophecies

of times yet to come. In *The Centuries*, begun in 1554 AD, Nostradamus offered the first of what was to be a ten-volume series, each consisting of 100 four-line verses called quatrains, which purported to offer details of ages still unborn.

Contrary to popular belief, Nostradamus was not a prophet of doom (at least for our time). Although many of his prophecies were dire, he saw no end to the world before the 86th century. The





Plague in an Ancient City, (Plague of Athens)



quatrains have attracted, ever since, the fascination of millions, especially as great events have sprung, seemingly, straight from his pages. It is argued that he predicted the French Revolution, the birth and rise to power of Hitler, and the assassination of John F. Kennedy, to say nothing of 9/11. And now, according to a 'viral' and anonymous internet meme, Nostradamus is also said to have predicted COVID 19.

In 1551 AD, said the post, he warned of the coming of the pandemic. "There will be a twin year (2020) from which will arise a queen (corona) who will come from the east (China) and who will spread a plague (virus) in the darkness of night, on a country with 7 hills (Italy) and will transform the twilight of men into dust (death), to destroy and ruin the world." As impressive as it sounds,

however, the problem is that no evidence can be found that Nostradamus ever said such a thing. According to the Snopes.com fact-checking site: "this particular prediction was not expressed in quatrain form, nor could we find anything like it published in *Les Prophéties*. We also found no mention of this supposed prophecy prior to the events of early 2020, which generally indicates it is a modern hoax."

As with most genuine Nostradamus quatrains, it is virtually impossible to pin down what the writer really meant, but maybe that was part of the point. The late Joseph Jochmans, an authority on Nostradamus wrote in 1995 in *Atlantis Rising Magazine*, "The more one studies what (Nostradamus) actually wrote in his original Old French verses, the more one realizes there are

several potential meanings to his prophecies, which can lead to several possible directions that the prophecies can take. In essence, what Nostradamus did in his prophetic messages was to set a mirror before us, showing us the different pathways we can take that already exist within us. Which of his prophecies we choose to fulfill remains up to us."

Whether or not present calamities have been foretold by ancient prophets is a debate for another day, but there remains yet another way the present can be illuminated by the past. "History doesn't repeat itself," Mark Twain is believed to have said, "but it often rhymes," and whether the poetry comes in epic form or in quatrains, there certainly seem to be cadences in current events that echo ancient refrains. ■



FABULOUS CREATURES

PESTA, THE PLAGUE HAG OF SCANDINAVIA



**CHARLES
CHRISTIAN**

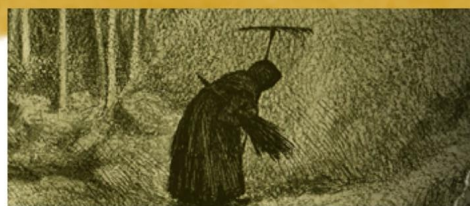
Charles Christian is a barrister and Reuters correspondent turned writer, award-winning tech journalist, radio presenter, podcaster, blogger, storyteller, and sometime werewolf-hunter who presents a weekly podcast: the Weird Tales Radio Show

Last month we encountered the Scandinavian Huldra and this month we are staying in the old Norse lands to meet a far more ominous creature: the Pesta. While the Pesta can be traced back to the mid-14th century, she remains eerily relevant today in

these times of the Coronavirus pandemic, for she is the plague witch or plague demon of Scandinavian folklore.

Pesta is consistently described as a terrible, old, ashen-faced woman, usually wearing a red skirt, who makes her way from village to village bringing death in her wake. She carries with her a broomstick and a rake. If you encounter Pesta with her rake then you can take comfort from the fact some of your community will survive by escaping between the tines, however, if she is sweeping with her broom, then you are all doomed and will be swept away by plague and pestilence.

Other aspects of the Pesta legend include tales of



her being accompanied on her travels by rats, and that she carries with her a large book in which are written the names of all the people doomed to die within the coming months.

What is intriguing is the way the Pesta embodies the way the Black Death (or Bubonic Plague) actually spread throughout Scandinavia – and not just Scandinavia but the rest of Europe – in the middle years of the 14th century. With no scientific understanding of how the *Yersinia pestis* bacterium exists in the fleas that are carried by rats, people looked for supernatural explanations for why death mysteriously moved from community to community, afflicting rich and poor alike, in some instances killing everyone (the mortality rate in Scandinavia was around 60 percent, with the dead outnumbering the living by a ratio of 3:2) but in other places leaving them relatively unscathed. In other words, the broom and the rake.

Legends of the Pesta also describe her traveling from place to place by ship, which again echoes the reality of the Black Death – in medieval Europe, boat trips across seas and along



rivers were a popular means of travel at a time when roads were dangerous, muddy tracks haunted by bandits. And, of course, all boats have rats in their holds; rats carrying plague-infected fleas. Indeed, the Black Death arrived in Europe in January 1348 on merchant ships docking at the ports of Genoa and Venice.

We owe our current knowledge of the Pesta to the Norwegian priest, folklorist, and historian Andreas Faye, who in 1833 published a collection of legends and folktales handed down from generation to generation by traditional Norwegian hunting and farming communities. However, our most abiding images of the Pesta are those painted by the Norwegian artist Theodor Kittelsen in the final years of the 19th century.

It will be interesting to see in the decades and centuries to come how folktales will depict, explain and/or blame the spread of the Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020. Burning 5G radio towers and crates of Corona beer perhaps? I promise you all a cheery fabulous creature next time! ■

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DID A ROMAN LEGION END UP IN CHINA?

THE LOST LEGION OF CARRHAE

|| BY CALEB STROM

ROME and China are two major civilizations that shaped the cultures within their sphere of influence. They are also cultures that appear to have been mostly isolated from each other. For this reason, any contact between the cultures has fascinated historians ever since Western scholars began to study China and Chinese scholars began to study the West. This includes stories like that of the lost legion of Carrhae, whose members may have ended up in Liqian, China.

THE LEGEND OF THE LOST LEGION OF CARRHAE

The legend begins in 53 BC with the Battle of Carrhae between the Roman general Marcus Licinius Crassus and the Parthian general Surena. Carrhae is a location near the modern-day Syrian-Turkish border. In antiquity, it was near the fringes of the Roman Empire in the West and the Parthian Empire in the East.



Bust of Marcus Licinius Crassus



Crassus was already one of the wealthiest men in the Roman republic, but he had a desire to access the wealth of Parthia, so he convinced the Senate to let him lead 42,000 Roman soldiers into the battlefield against the Parthians. In the battle, Crassus and his army suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Surena and his 10,000 archers. Crassus attempted to negotiate a truce but was killed in the process. According to legend, liquid gold was poured down his throat as a punishment for his greed. He was also allegedly beheaded, and his body was desecrated.

Of the surviving Roman soldiers, 10,000 of them were captured alive by the Parthians. According to some accounts, they were relocated to the eastern border of the Parthian Empire. It is believed that they were most likely sent to what is now Turkmenistan. It was a Parthian custom to send prisoners of war captured in the west to the far east to secure their loyalty against their eastern rivals, the Huns.

17 years later, in 36 BC, on the western border of the Han Chinese Empire, the battle of Zhizhi was fought between the Chinese and the Huns, a traditional enemy of China. The Chinese annals record mercenaries fighting on the side of the Huns who used a “fish scale” formation. The fish scale formation impressed the Chinese and they invited the soldiers to come back to China and become part of the border guard in the modern Gansu province. A city and county were also made for them which was named Li-Jien or Liqian.

THE LOST LEGION OF CARRHAE AND THE MYSTERIOUS ARMY

The Chinese description of the fish scale formation used by the mercenary soldiers bears a resemblance to the testudo formation practiced by Roman legions. This has led to the popular theory that these mysterious soldiers were in fact exiled Roman legionnaires from the Battle of Carrhae, who had hired themselves out as mercenaries for the Huns.

This idea was first suggested by the historian Homer Dubs. Dubs argued that some of the soldiers in exile gave up trying to go back to Rome and hired themselves out as mercenaries for local warlords in the region. Some of these former Roman soldiers may have found themselves working for the Huns in their war against the Chinese.

Proponents of this theory have searched for Liqian and believe that they have found it. Zhelaizhai is a modern village near Lanzhou. What is interesting about the town is that the people living there have traits such as brown hair and blue eyes, which contrast with the appearance of most of the surrounding people. Additionally, a helmet was reportedly found with Chinese characters written on it saying, “one of the surrendered.” Two other artifacts of interest are a Roman-style water pot, and a trunk of wood with stakes similar to those used by the Romans to construct forts. The appearance of the villagers and the discovery of unusual artifacts has led many

believers in the legend to identify Zhelaizhai with Liqian. Because the legend has been popularized, the town has used it to attract tourists, even going as far as to construct Roman-style buildings and statues.

ASSESSMENT OF THE FACTS

Is it possible that the inhabitants of the unusual village could be descendants of displaced Romans? This has attracted the interest of both Chinese and Western scientists. A genetic study from the University of Lanzhou showed that the inhabitants of the town do have connections to Europe, which makes the theory more plausible, though it is also true that the town is built along the old Silk Road so connections with western populations are more likely regardless of whether they were Roman. Another connection that has been noted is that the name “Li-Jien” sounds like “legion” when spoken in Chinese. Some have used this to argue that the name is originally derived from the word.



The Testudo formation



Jonathan Kos-Read/CC BY ND 2.0

Above: A man in Liqian, China. There is debate whether his village was inhabited by Roman soldiers from the lost legion of Carrhae

On the other hand, many scholars have doubts about the feasibility of the hypothesis. Although it is possible that a group of Roman mercenaries could have made it all the way to western China, it is still an enormous distance. And, even though there is circumstantial evidence, there is no evidence that would confirm that Romans had been in Liqian in the past.

The Roman-style pot could have been gained through trade, and the other artifacts are not uniquely Roman. Also, the physical appearance and genetic relations of the villagers doesn't require that they be directly descended from Mediterranean peoples since there are many central Asian ethnic groups that also have

genetic ties to the Mediterranean region and traits such as blonde or brown hair and blue eyes.

Even if they do have European or Mediterranean lineage, this wouldn't necessarily mean that they had to be descended from a lost Roman legion since the town is adjacent to the old Silk Road, making intermarriage with distant travelers at any time more likely. These problems do not rule out the theory, but they also leave it unconfirmed. One thing that is for certain, however, is that the people of Liqian stand out from the surrounding people in the region, a fact that still remains unexplained. ■

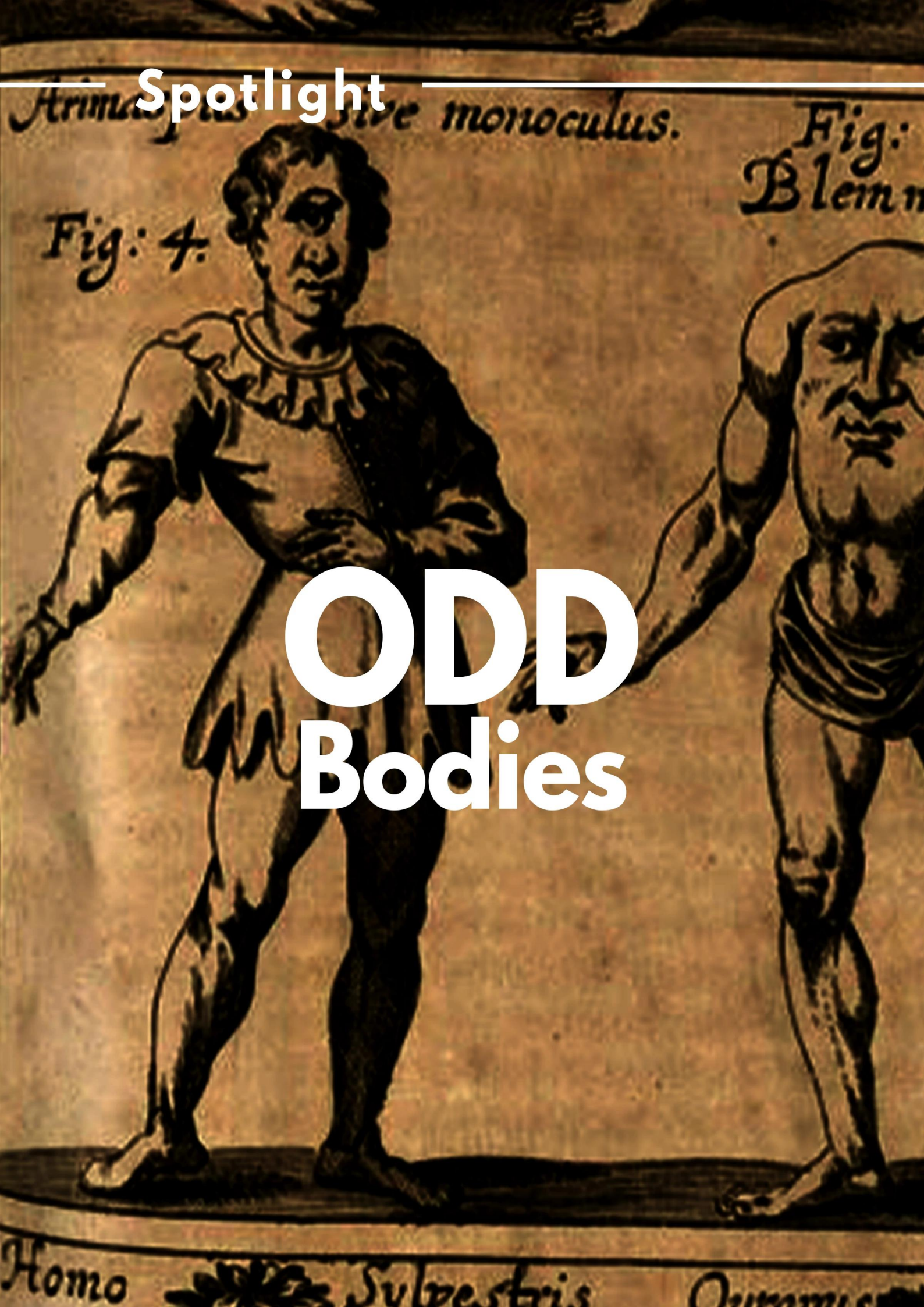




Rock the Casbah

Along the former caravan route between the Sahara and Marrakech in present-day Morocco, one finds the mudbrick *ksar* or fortified village (Casbah) of Aït Benhaddou. None of the current buildings are believed to date from before the 17th century, but they were likely built with the same construction methods and designs as had been used during the Almoravid dynasty, an imperial 11th-century Berber Muslim dynasty. Camel caravans guided by Berbers used to travel the Sahara trade route, not only transporting cargo, but also exchanging culture and religion. Today, several families still inhabit this UNESCO site, which includes a mosque and a *caravanserai* – an ancient camel-caravan hotel providing safety against robbers and shelter during the night.

Spotlight



ODD Bodies

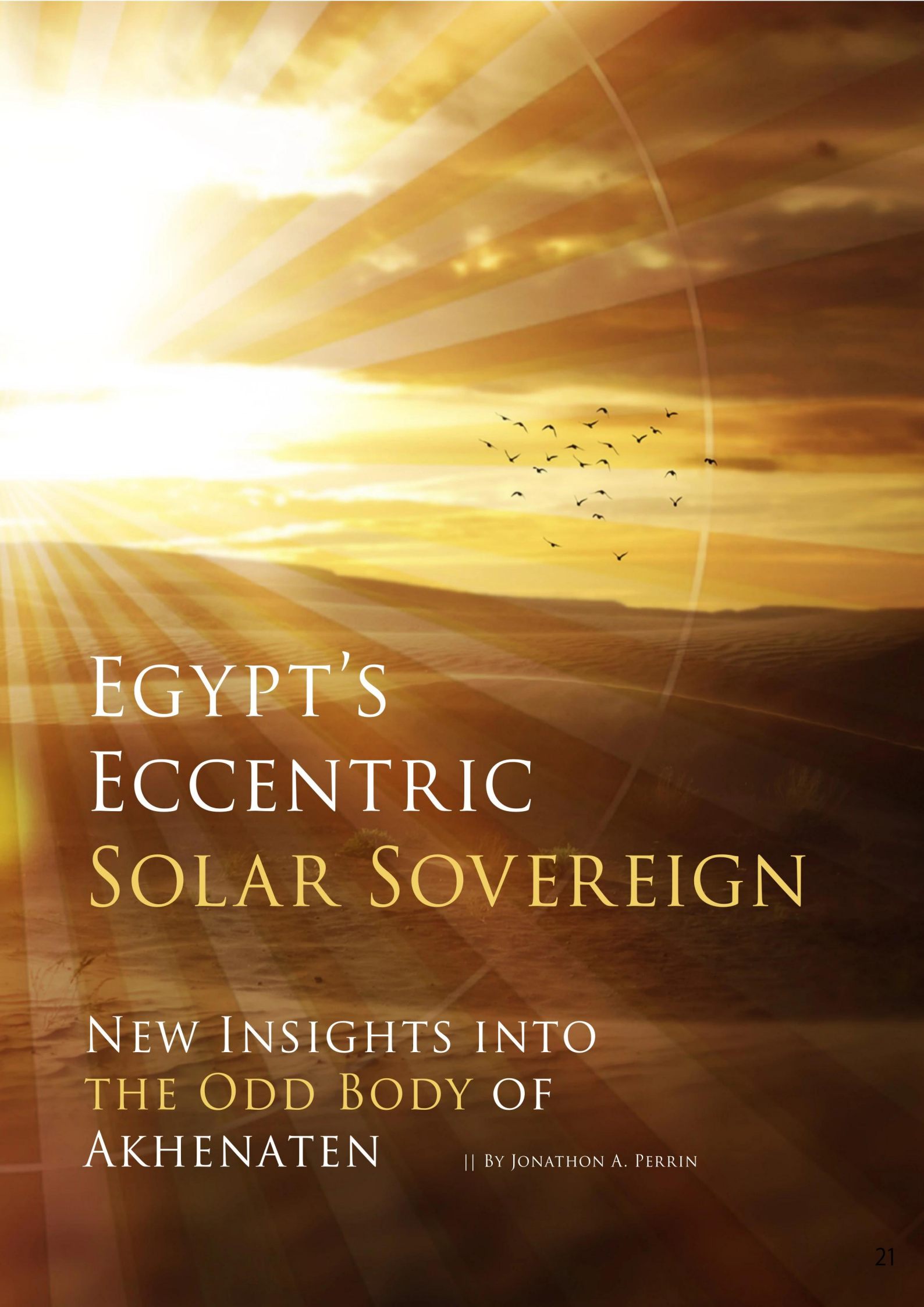
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Homo cum aversis plant

Fig: 6





A golden sunset over a desert landscape. The sun is low on the horizon, casting long, warm rays across the sky and the undulating sand dunes. A flock of birds is silhouetted against the bright sky, flying in a loose formation. The overall color palette is dominated by warm, golden-brown tones.

EGYPT'S ECCENTRIC SOLAR SOVEREIGN

NEW INSIGHTS INTO
THE ODD BODY OF
AKHENATEN

|| BY JONATHON A. PERRIN

When it comes to strange bodies in ancient Egypt, there are perhaps none stranger than the royal family of Akhenaten. From out of the millennia of static, orthodox imagery they leap—vivid personalities, alive and in motion, and in sharp contrast to everything that had preceded them. Their bizarre images and distorted statues offer us a rare glimpse into the ancient world's oddest revolution, one that lasted fewer than twenty years and that consumed all aspects of life in Egypt before it nearly consumed the country itself. It was an episode so traumatic that later kings ordered the wholesale destruction of any trace, any remembrance of its blasphemies.

Regarded then and today as the “heretic” Pharaoh, Akhenaten (formerly Amenhotep IV) lived during Egypt's prosperous 18th Dynasty, from around 1373 to 1337 BC. He was married to the beautiful Nefertiti, fathered six daughters, and was probably Tutankhamun's uncle. During his reign, he completely altered most aspects of Egyptian religious life, abandoning its traditional polytheism and introducing the world's first monotheism, a cult of his personal god, the Aten sun disk. This was accompanied by a shift in all art forms, including sculpture, inscriptions, and painting, creating a unique assemblage of artifacts.

Perhaps no other people from antiquity have prompted as much contention, consternation, or confusion as did the heretic king and his wife. Amarna-expert Erik Hornung (*Akhenaten and the Religion of Light*, 2001) notes that “the art is a distortion of reality, a rebellion against the classical ideal of beauty established in Dynasty 18...The contours of the human figure swell and recede, creating the rhythmic play of the overly swollen thighs and the scrawny, chicken-like calves.” So why did the royal couple change their



Akhenaten © Joanna Gillan

country's art so dramatically, depicting themselves with such odd bodies – extended legs, spindly arms, long necks, drooping bellies, and enormous backsides?

A NEW DAWN

Ever since the peculiar images of Akhenaten were first seen by the modern world, he has remained a riddle. Was he androgynous? A eunuch? A woman-acting-as-man? A hermaphrodite? Did he suffer from some pathology? Many syndromes have been proposed to account

for his odd body, including: adiposogenital dystrophy, androgen insensitivity, Antley-Bixler, Marfan, or familial gynecomastia. These questions were finally put to rest in 2010 with a molecular genetic study by Zahi Hawass and his team of the mummified remains of the royal family of the 18th dynasty. It ruled out the presence of several diseases in Akhenaten's family, including Marfan syndrome and gynecomastia.

We must, therefore, seek our answers in the particular mindset of the king.

Why did the royal couple change their country's art so dramatically, depicting themselves with such odd bodies – extended legs, spindly arms, long necks, drooping bellies, and enormous backsides?

Below: Stela depicting the royal family relaxing with their children in an unprecedented and now classic scene of the first family at play

Far Right: Colossal of Akhenaten



Akhenaten was inverting the standards of Egyptian art. Whereas traditional Pharaohs were hyper-masculinized, with broad shoulders, narrow waists, muscular arms and legs, and rigid, formal clothing, Akhenaten inverted these ideals by giving himself narrow shoulders, broad waists, spindly arms and legs, and loose clothing. He shed formality and rigid structure and replaced them with playful, imaginative scenes. Instead of undifferentiated hands, we see individual fingers with nails. Instead of solid feet,

his sculptors carved each toe separately, and his painters even detailed each toenail of the princesses' feet on the famed Ashmolean "Princesses Fresco".

Instead of horse heads in profile, they now look out directly at the viewer. We see an entire family relaxing, tenderly embracing, and smiling. Nefertiti sits in her husband's lap, her feet dangling above the ground. Sophistication, pleasure, joy, and grace are all emphasized by the flowing lines, creating a stunning new form of beauty.

Olaf Tausch/CC BY 3.0



This sensuous style became the *parti pris* of the Amarna period, and contrasted sharply with the former heavier style.

Other artistic changes followed, including the shift from using raised relief, in which the figure stands out from the background, to “sunk” relief, in which the figure is cut into the rock - a faster technique offering a new interplay of light and shadow. Instead of formal portraits with little emphasis on family, we see a veritable photo album of family life, and can watch as the girls appear, one by one behind their parents. We also see a new realism. This inversion of artistic norms mirrored Akhenaten’s larger program of inverting his country’s polytheism into a singular monotheism centered on the Aten.

YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION?

To understand why Akhenaten looked so unusual, we must understand that he initiated the greatest revolution in Egypt’s millennia-long history, single-handedly. As Egyptologist Jan Assmann has described in his *From Akhenaten to Moses* (2016): “This was clearly a violent act that must be interpreted in terms of revolution rather than evolution.” Simson Najovits summarizes: “it briefly destroyed the very foundations of traditional Egyptian religion and art and altered its world view.”

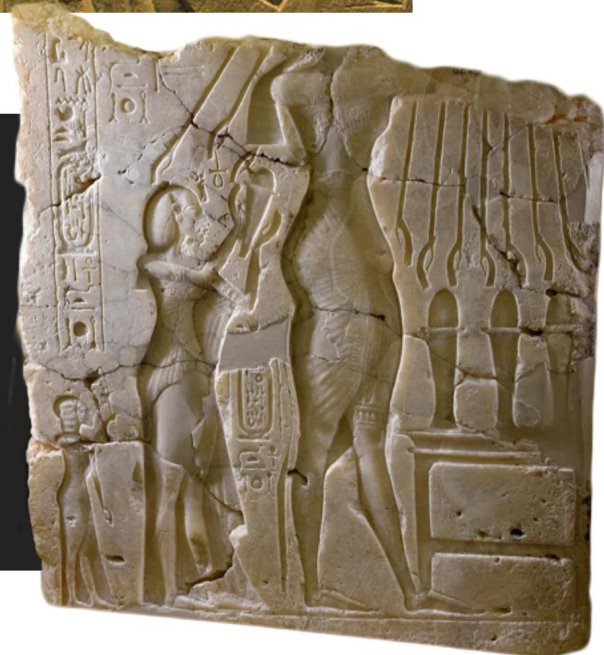
Within a few years of ascending the throne, it was clear that the new king Amenhotep IV was trying to start a revolution. His father, Amenhotep III, had been Egypt’s wealthiest Pharaoh, and the country was the unchallenged supremacy of the Bronze Age world. However, soon after his son took charge, he immediately antagonized the powerful Amun priests by building new Aten temples beside them. The animosity between them reached a breaking point in Year Five, and the king left the capital forever. He changed his name to Akhenaten (“Shining Spirit of the Aten”) and ordered the construction of a new city called Akhet-Aten (“Horizon of Light of the Aten”, known today as Tell el-Amarna).



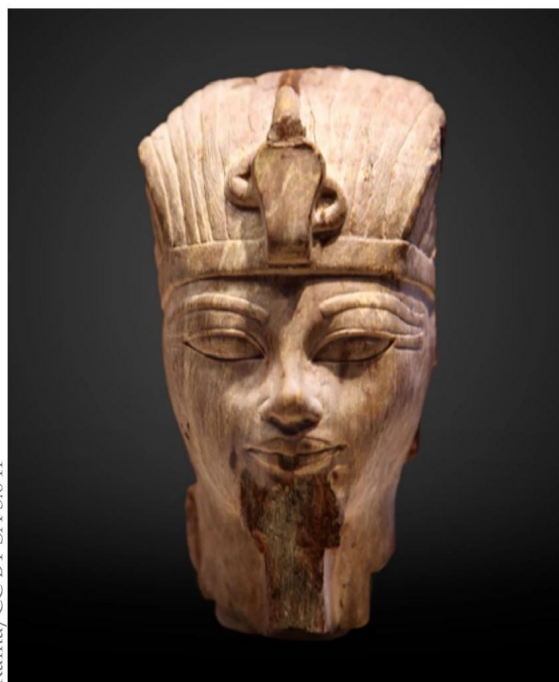
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Above: Children with pens and papyrus scrolls; relief from Amarna

Right: Alabaster sunken relief depicting Akhenaten (head lost), Nefertiti, and daughter Meritaten



Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin/CC BY SA 4.0

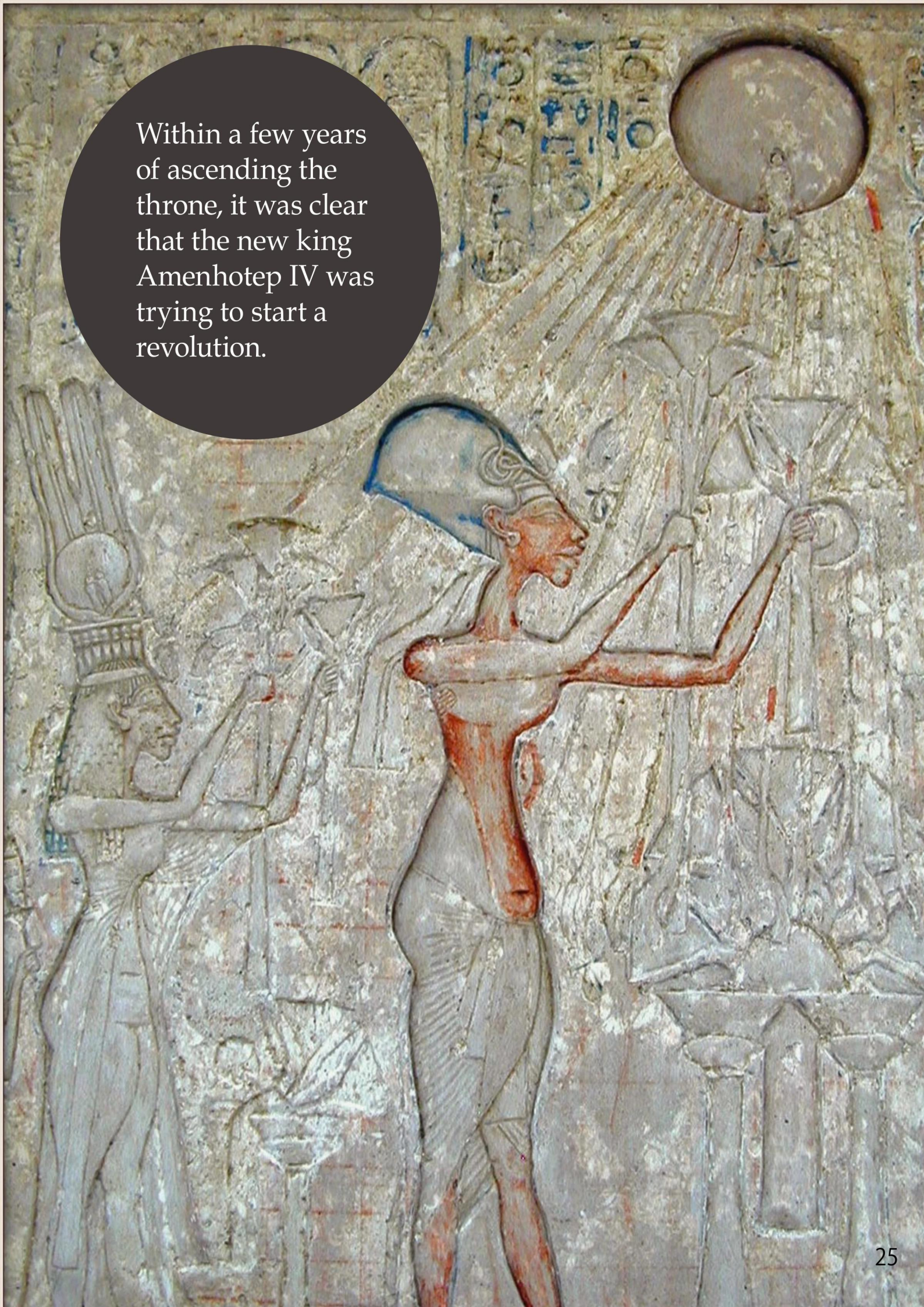


Rama/CC BY SA 3.0 fr

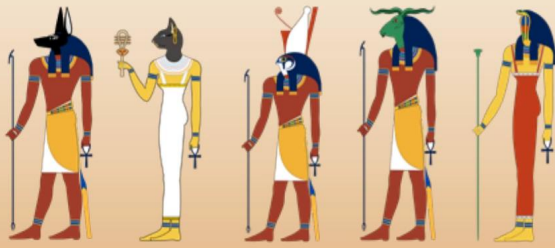
Left: Father of Akhenaten, Amenhotep III, and the richest king in Egypt’s history

Opposite: Relief of Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and two daughters adoring the Aten; 18th dynasty

Within a few years of ascending the throne, it was clear that the new king Amenhotep IV was trying to start a revolution.



10 Hybrid Egyptian Gods



Anubis –The jackal head god of death, mummification, embalming, cemeteries, tombs, and the Underworld.

Bastet – The cat-headed goddess was originally a fierce lioness warrior of the sun but changed into a gentler cat goddess.

Horus - Has the head of a falcon or hawk and was god of kingship and the sky.

Khepri – The dung beetle-headed solar deity, rolls the sun across the sky like the scarab rolls balls of dung on the ground.

Khnum – The ram-headed god was the source of the Nile, who created human bodies from river clay.

Meretseger – The cobra-headed goddess was guardian of the Theban Necropolis and she protected the Valley of the Kings.

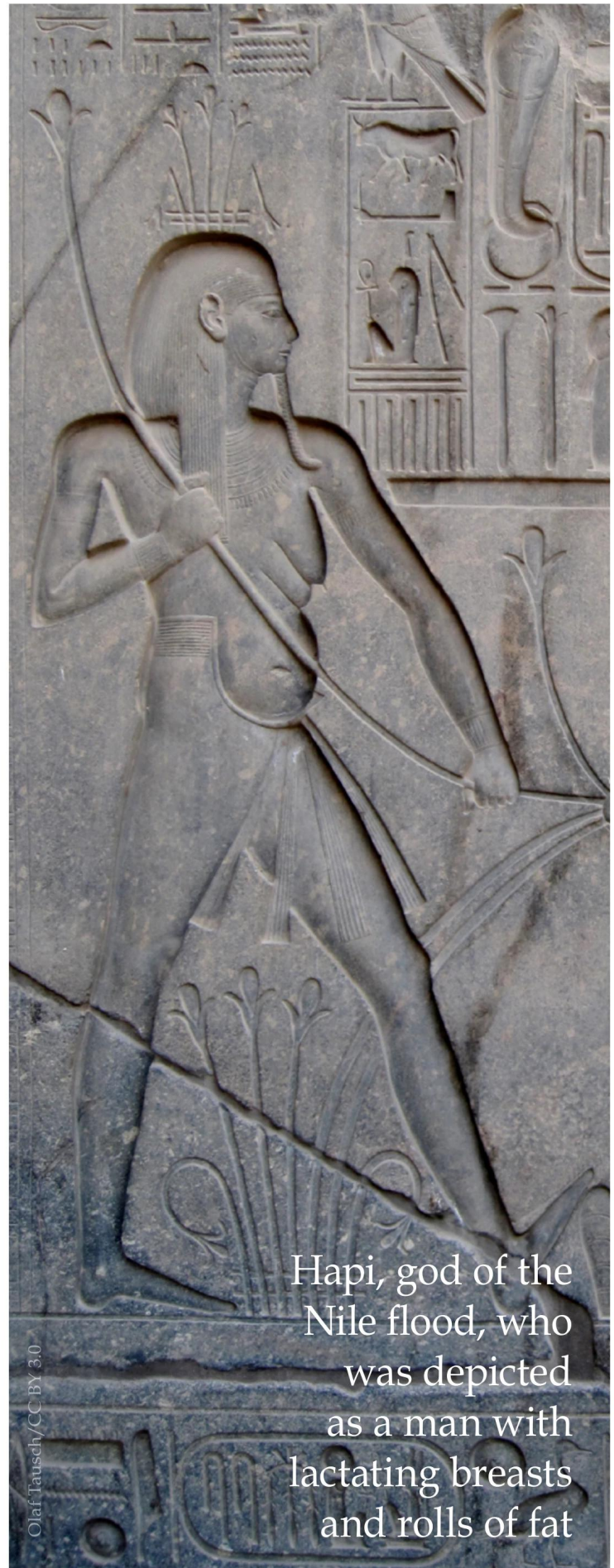
Sekmet – The lioness-headed goddess was the protector of the pharaohs and led them in warfare and the afterlife.

Set – The animal head of Set is not identified, but could be an aardvark, donkey, jackal, or fox! Set was god of chaos, fire, trickery, violence, and more.

Sobek – The crocodile-headed god of the Nile symbolized pharaonic power, fertility, and military prowess, but was a protective deity and warded off evil.

Taweret – The goddess of childbirth and fertility is a female hippo with feline attributes, pendulous woman's breasts, the limbs and paws of a lion, and the back and tail of a crocodile.

Thoth – The ibis or baboon-headed god ruled over wisdom, writing, hieroglyphs, science, magic, art, judgment and the dead.



Hapi, god of the Nile flood, who was depicted as a man with lactating breasts and rolls of fat

Olaf Tausch/CC BY 3.0

Fortunately, many examples from throughout his reign allow us to chart the course of his artistic growth. Scholars have chronicled at least three different art styles of Akhenaten and his sculptors: an early, traditional phase (years 1-2), a second, extreme phase (years 3-9), and a third, moderate phase (years 10-17), all corresponding to religious changes. In an early transition scene, we see the king in his new style beside Nefertiti, still shown in the traditional manner. His most physically exaggerated images, such as the giant Colossi, date to years 3-5, while other more realistic, nuanced depictions, date to later in the reign.

Perhaps most strikingly we see a strong androgyny in the shape of Akhenaten. This has been commented on for over a century, and the connection has long ago been made between the androgyny of creation in Egyptian mythology and the ambiguous figure of the king.

Androgynous gods had always featured prominently in Egypt, including the primeval waters of Nun, and Hapi, god of the Nile flood, who was depicted as a man with lactating breasts and rolls of fat. These androgynous deities were perceived as totems of creation and fecundity, and it is no doubt Akhenaten wished to capture this same power of gender ambiguity. He kept the breasts and belly of Hapi but added wide hips and buttocks. So, while he appeared androgynous, he looked nothing like the orthodox Egyptian depiction of creative androgyny, but rather his own inspired version of it.

ANIMAL I HAVE BECOME

I have written previously in *Atlantis Rising Magazine* ("The Bird King" Vol. 128) that Akhenaten was attempting to integrate bird imagery into his own physique. I suggested the king was trying

to imbue himself with the elegance, essence, and energy of birds, all without violating his proscription against animal imagery. Akhenaten adored birds, including the falcon god Ra-Horakhty, the immortal heron *bennu*, the quail chick of the light god Shu, the ostrich feather of *ma'at*, and the northern bald ibis of the *akh*, the king's namesake, *Akh-en-Aten*, the "shining immortal spirit of the Aten". How fitting then would it be for him to exude the impression of a bird.

I believe Akhenaten faced a challenge of somehow preserving these animal aspects without actually depicting them – and his solution was ingenious: he made himself appear *like* a bird. I have suggested many of his physiological traits, such as a serpentine neck, bulging chest and buttocks, tapering thighs, spindly arms and legs, and hyper-flexible knee joints, were meant to invoke avian attributes. In particular, backwards-bending knee joints and long, curved necks were both extremely odd, yet key features of Amarna-period art, and the closest parallels I can find come from birds.

I also noticed a strong resemblance of the faces of the king and queen to that of lions, which were long associated with Egyptian kingship. Thirteen hundred years after Khafre built the Great Sphinx, Akhenaten's grandfather, Thutmose IV, would dream of and ultimately restore it. We see Thutmose as a sphinx on a carved wooden chair, and his grandson Akhenaten is likewise shown as a sphinx, albeit with a markedly different face: one that juts out forward, with a receding forehead. His face does however appear leonine, paralleling the golden lion heads from Tutankhamun's ritual couch. His face protrudes forward unmistakably, and cuts the same broad outline.



The "akh" bird of Egyptian mythology, based on the iridescent northern bald ibis. It had been used as a sign for "immortal shining spirit" during the Pyramid age, and was revived under Akhenaten, who used it in his own name.

NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

As revolutionary as Akhenaten's new program was, it could not entirely escape the past. It included many references to the Old Kingdom, whose Pharaohs, above all else, wished to ascend to heaven on rays of light. Khufu built the Great Pyramid, allegedly, to magically achieve this, by mirroring the sun's rays, even calling it the *Akhet-Khufu* (the "Horizon of Light of Khufu"). The Old Kingdom was the zenith of Ra's power, his cult at Heliopolis, and of Pharaoh, who was for the first time fused directly with Ra. This act of self-deification was eventually revived by Amenhotep III and ultimately Akhenaten, who spent his entire youth in Heliopolis, learning about his glorious solar ancestors.

The king wished to convey the image of the scribe and priest, such as Hemiunu, the Great Pyramid's Architect, who was similarly depicted with breasts and stomach rolls. Further, he wanted to convey the image of a family man, a man who shared the same love for his mother, wives, and children that so characterized the Old Kingdom Pharaohs. Family was vitally important to the cult of Ra from its earliest days (see King Djoser's children hugging his leg on a relief from Heliopolis), and Akhenaten wanted to replicate and enhance this ancient emphasis on family, children, and posterity.

Another Egyptian custom that survived the revolution was the royal cubit and its 28 subdivisions, or "fingerbreadths" of 1.875cm. We can tell this because the famous bust of Nefertiti follows

Hans Ollermann/CC BY 2.0



precisely these measurements, down to every facial feature, as documented by Egyptologist Rolf Krauss. However, when we compare the king's body to traditional figures, we see that he was exactly two grid-squares taller. Instead of 18 squares tall, he was 20, appearing as a divinity, beyond human, and closer to the Aten than anyone else. Everyone worshipped the king, and we read in the tomb of the general Aye: "O each one who loves life and desires a good lifetime: **worship the king**, unique like Aten."

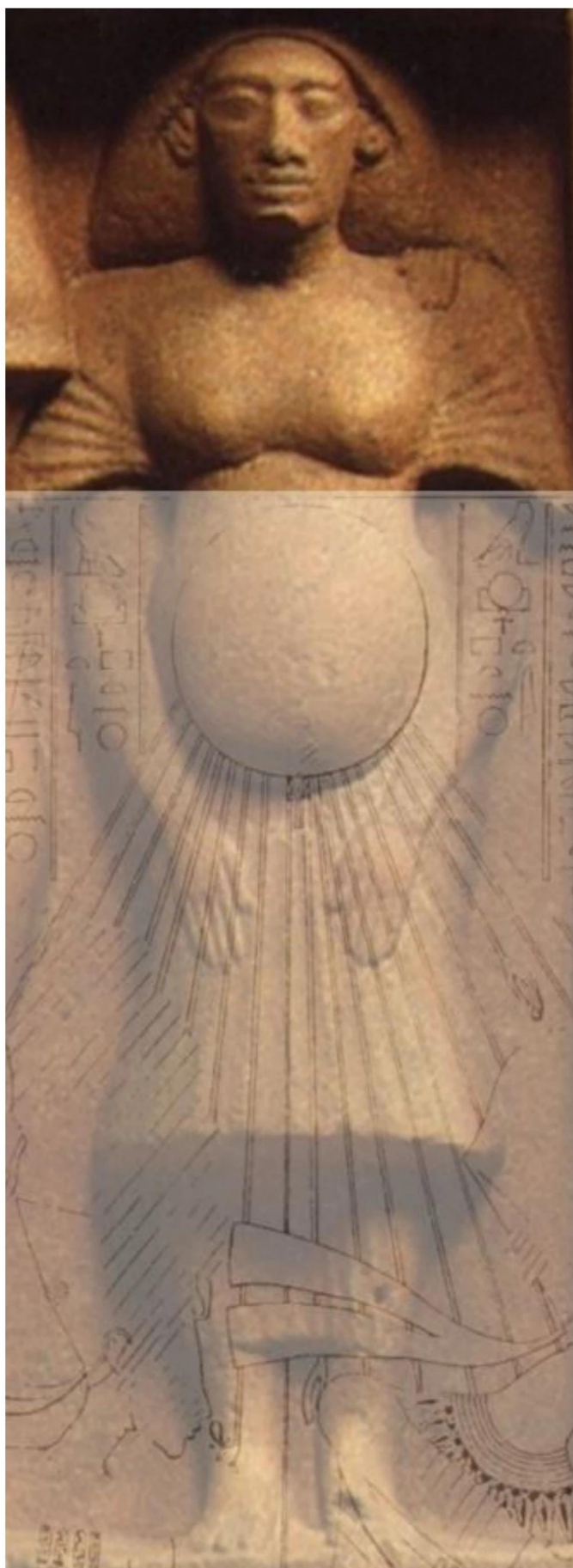
There is a further source of possible influence upon the king—that of Minoan art from the Island of Crete. The Minoans were a powerful Aegean Empire during Akhenaten's time, and they

interacted and traded with Egypt on a regular basis. A golden seal of Nefertiti was even found in a Minoan shipwreck. Far from the boorish Cretans of Greek lore, their art was, in fact, anything but vulgar. It was exotic, alive, fluid, and more natural than that of Egypt's, and it is likely Akhenaten was influenced by its stunning realism when creating his own style. He even shared the Minoan preference for the color blue, which was a staple shade at both Crete and Amarna.

Finally, we must consider the degree to which the king may have "solarized" his body, incorporating the distinctive features of their new god: a full round body with slender arms. Could they have been trying to emulate the Aten?



Mery-Ra, his high priest claims: "O Living Aten ... your rays be upon your beloved son. May you love him and make him be like Aten. May you construct him in your image." Did the king have spindly arms to more closely resemble the gracile arms of his deity? In particular, a statue of Bek, their chief sculptor, shows his round belly and pleated kilt and looks suspiciously like the Aten and its rays. The rays were its most important element, not the disk itself but its light. Mery-Ra says: "Your rays reach the eyes of all you created." Even the king's androgyny may be explained via his desire to physically emulate the Aten, who was the: "the mother and father of all you create".



Bek, with his belly and kilt, looks suspiciously like the Aten and its rays (by author)



Painted limestone statue of Akhenaten and Nefertiti together, hand-in-hand, in the later, less-exaggerated art style after Year 9.

THE FIRST INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY

Egyptologist James Henry Breasted called Akhenaten “the first individual in history”, and he might not be far off. Perhaps “first power couple” is more appropriate, for it is doubtful whether either could have achieved their revolution without the other. They almost always appear together, often embracing, even kissing, far more than any other Pharaoh.

The royal couple completely redefined life, putting their own personal stamp on everything. Discarding the pantheon of gods, shutting down temples, firing priests, and starting a new capital city, they executed a true revolution of Egyptian life. In the end, these changes proved too esoteric for the people, too divorced from the administration. Seventeen years after they began their great transformation, Akhenaten and Nefertiti vanished from history. Within a few decades, their city was deserted, its population gone, and its experiment failed. As the Aten was forgotten, the very names of its founders became cursed. Their bodies have yet to be found, and their discovery would be Egypt’s greatest since Tutankhamun’s tomb was unearthed a century ago.

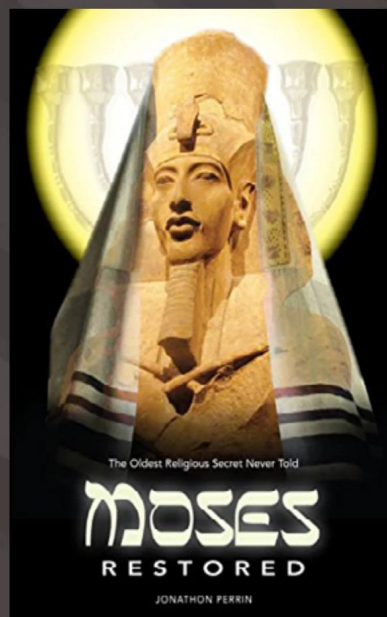
I believe this “power pair” were far ahead of their time, and that Egypt’s reigning “odd body” was a fusion of complex ideas of creation, androgyny, natural beauty, divinity, zoomorphism, and even solarization. Akhenaten represented a new synthesis of and answer to the ideas of monotheism and aniconism, which were constantly gestating inside the mind of the Pharaoh. He was also an inversion of and reaction against the restrictive norms

of Egyptian art, and on a more pragmatic level, the powerful priesthood of Amun, his chief rival and guardians of the old detested ways.

Akhenaten was crafting a new divine persona, elevating himself as the new god to be worshipped and adored. Yet this “god on earth” ultimately came crashing down. In a desperately sad scene, we see him and Nefertiti mourning their daughter Meketaten, lying in state while her parents, engulfed in sorrow, stand over her, their hands raised in grief, Akhenaten gripping his wife’s arm. Scenes like this contradict his claims of divinity and reveals him to be a genuine person underneath all the symbolism. As the first individual in history, beautiful yet terrifying, he created a face that still commands our attention, a physique that still seizes our imagination, and eyes that still invite intrigue. He was history’s first revolutionary, heralding a radical new way of life, with portraiture so complex, so inspiring, so human, that it still haunts us 3,300 years later. ■



Akhenaten © Joanna Gillan



*Jonathon Perrin is the author of **Moses Restored: The Oldest Religious Secret Never Told**, available in print or as an e-book from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).*

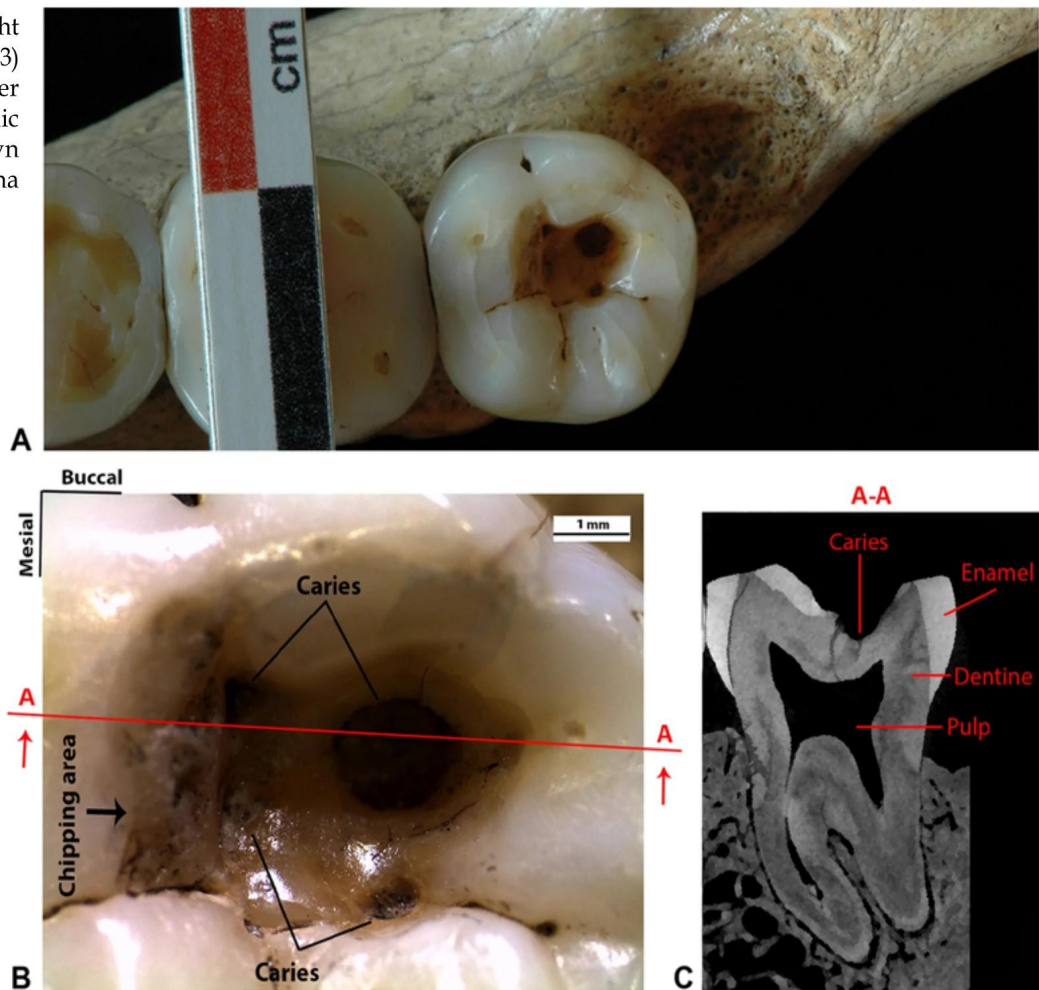
14,000 YEARS OF DENTISTRY

FROM BITUMEN FILLINGS
TO JEWEL-CAPPED TEETH

|| BY JOANNA GILLAN



The lower right third molar (RM3) of the Late Upper Palaeolithic specimen known as Villabruna



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Dentistry, in some form or another, has been practiced for at least 14,000 years, although tooth extraction and remedies for toothaches probably go back much further. The study of ancient remains from around the world has demonstrated the ingenuity that existed in the application of surgical and cosmetic dental practices.

In 2018, paleoanthropologist Stefano Benazzi from the University of Bologna in Italy identified the oldest known evidence of dentistry, dating back to the Late Upper Paleolithic. The well-preserved skeletal remains of a young man – dating back around 14,000 years – found in northern Italy in 1988 were pulled out for examination. Using scanning electron microscopy, scientists revealed micro-scratches, chipping, and cut marks on the tooth caused by sharp flint tools during scratching and levering to attack what would have been a painful cavity. The infected tooth was found to have been partially cleaned with the flint tools, marking an important development in the history of prehistoric dental surgery treatments.

The year prior, Dr. Benazzi had made another significant discovery – the world's most ancient dental fillings. They were spotted inside a pair of 13,000-year-old front teeth and were made of bitumen. Each of the individual's front teeth had a large hole in the incisor surface that extended down into the pulp chamber deep in the tooth. The holes had tiny horizontal marks that suggested they were drilled out and it appeared that bitumen was added to the cavity at the same time as the drilling. Researchers also found plant fibers and hair trapped in the bitumen, which may have been part of the filling material. According to Dr. Benazzi, the fillings most likely served the same purpose they do today: to reduce pain and keep food out of the cavities. The research team suggested that the bitumen and plant matter filler was chosen for its antiseptic qualities; used to prevent infection.

A later example of a dental filling was found in Slovenia in a 6,500-year-old jawbone, which had a cavity deep enough to impact the dentin layer of the tooth – it had been packed with beeswax.

Stringing and drilling beads with a bow drill. This technology was used in early dentistry to bore holes in teeth



Scientists are not sure how effective this was, but it probably reduced the pain and swelling.

TOOTH DRILLING ADVANCES

The Indus Valley Civilization yielded archaeological evidence for the earliest use of bow drills in dentistry, dating back 9,000 years. Sites in Pakistan revealed dental practices involving curing tooth related disorders with bow drills operated, perhaps, by skilled bead craftsmen. Scientists recreated the bow drills using the same natural materials: a stringed wooden bow was tied to a rotating spindle and the spindle was used as a drill with a flint head made to penetrate teeth. They found that this ancient form of dentistry was both reliable and effective.



DENTISTRY IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Historical records reveal numerous dental and hygiene procedures practiced by the ancient Egyptians. The Edwin Smith Papyrus, written in the 17th century BC, but which may reflect previous manuscripts from as early as 3000 BC, includes the treatment of several dental ailments, and the Ebers Papyrus, dating to the 16th century BC, contains 11 recipes which pertain to oral issues. Four of these are remedies for loose teeth: the tooth in question is filled with a mixture that is akin to a modern day composite filling: a filler agent (ground barley) is mixed with a liquid matrix (honey) and an antiseptic agent (yellow ochre). This is either used as an actual filling, or as a splint to keep the tooth in place. Scientists performing CT scans on the head of a 2,100-year-old Egyptian mummy also found evidence for cavities being filled with linen, which may have first been dipped in a medicine such as fig juice or cedar oil.

Hesi-Re is the first named “dentist” in ancient Egypt and the world. He was an official, physician, and scribe who lived during the Third Dynasty of Egypt, around 1600 BC, and served under the pharaoh Djoser. He bore titles such as "Chief of Dentists and Physicians", “Doctor of the Tooth” and "Chief of the King's Scribes". While he was ranked chief of dentists, it is not entirely clear what this title actually means, but he is credited as being the first man to recognize periodontal disease (gum disease).

Pharaonic physicians were no strangers to reconstruction work: there have been three instances of a dental bridge: one or more lost teeth reattached by means of a gold or silver wire to the surrounding teeth. In some cases, a bridge was made using donor teeth. However, it is unclear whether these works were performed during the life of the patient or after death – to tidy them up, as it were, before their burial.

Djedmaatesankh was an Egyptian woman from the city then known as Waset (known to the Greeks as Thebes, now Luxor) who died in the middle of the 9th century BC. She was an ordinary middle-class woman and musician. CT-scans performed on her remains show that she likely died of a dental abscess, which upon erupting, may have led to a fatal blood infection. As a demonstration of early dentistry, tracks on her jawbone are believed to be a result of unsuccessful attempts to drain the abscess.

Mummy case of Djedmaatesankh, 22nd Dynasty, circa 850 BC



Opposite, above: Examples of ancient teeth and how they were wired together. The two center teeth are donor teeth



Gold teeth,
Pre-Columbian,
Ecuador

MAYA BLING

The Maya are credited with being the masters of cosmetic dentistry as they were known to decorate teeth by embedding them with precious stones or by carving notches and grooves into them. Tiny holes were chipped out of teeth and ornamental stones—including jade—were attached with an adhesive made out of natural resins, such as plant sap, which was mixed with other chemicals and crushed bones. The dentists likely had a sophisticated knowledge of tooth anatomy because they knew how to drill into teeth without hitting the pulp inside.

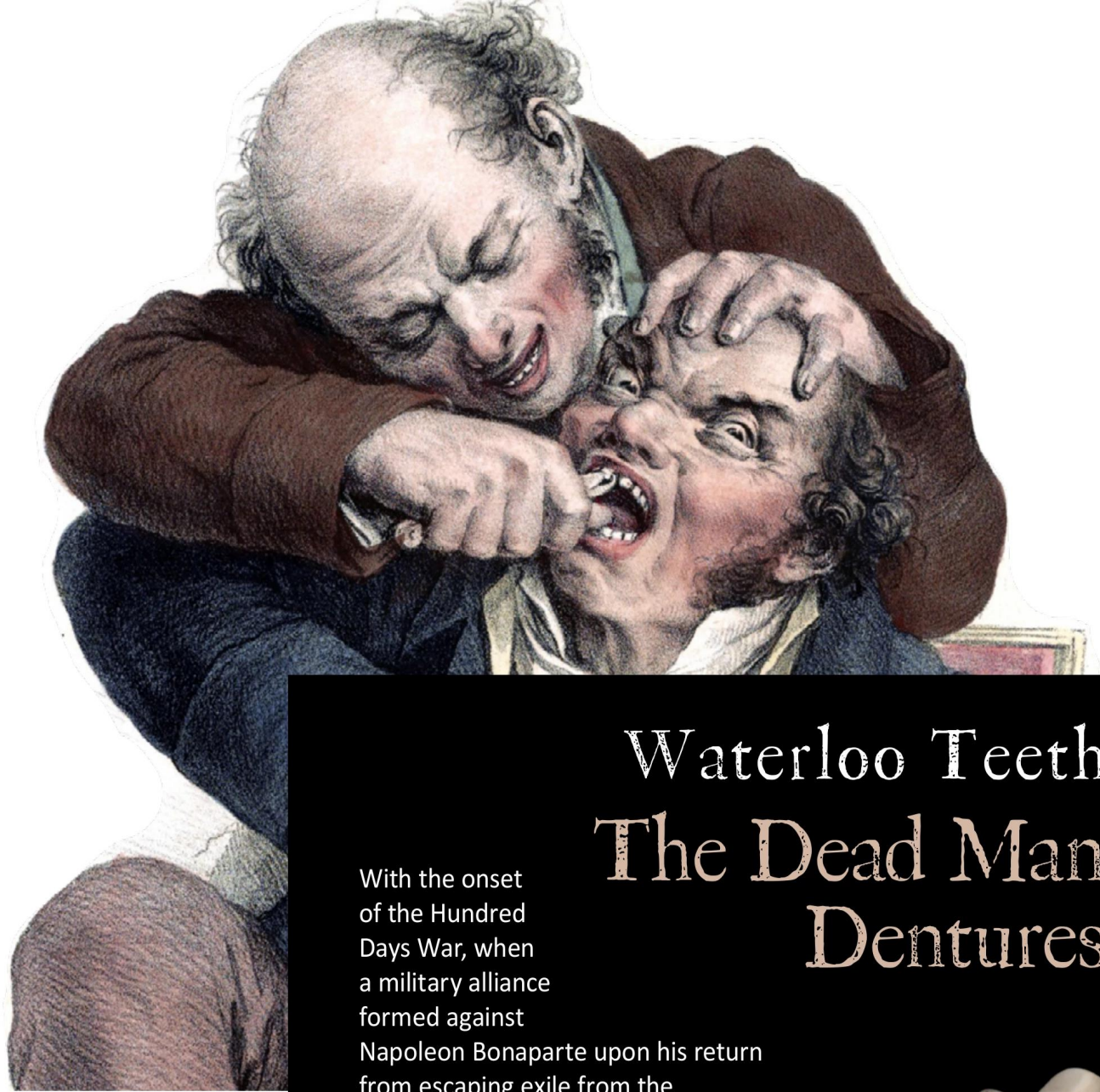
In 2016, archaeologists unearthed the 1,600-year-old skeleton of an upper-class woman in Mexico's famous ruins of Teotihuacan. She had an elongated skull, a prosthetic tooth made of a green stone known as serpentine and her top front teeth were encrusted with round pyrite stones. This was a practice that was used among the nobility in Maya regions in southern Mexico and Central America.

DENTISTRY OF THE MIDDLE AGES

During the Middle Ages and throughout the 19th century, dentistry was not a profession in itself, and often dental procedures

were performed by barbers or general physicians. Barbers usually limited their practice to extracting teeth which alleviated pain and associated chronic tooth infection.

In the 1400s, dentures seemed to take more of the modernized shape that we see today. These dentures were still made from carved animal bone or ivory, but some were made from human teeth. Grave robbers often used to steal the teeth from recently deceased people and sell them to dentists, and the poor used to make money by having their teeth extracted and selling them. The finished denture would not be very aesthetically pleasing or



Waterloo Teeth The Dead Man Dentures

With the onset of the Hundred Days War, when a military alliance formed against Napoleon Bonaparte upon his return from escaping exile from the island of Elba in Italy, looters found themselves in pursuit of an unusual commodity - teeth.

In the aftermath of battles, bands of thieves would descend upon the dead and skillfully extract the healthy teeth of fallen soldiers. When the war culminated in the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 AD, tens of thousands of men lost their lives and business was in bloom. Fallen soldiers at Waterloo were young, able-bodied European men – with their teeth healthy and white. The quantities were so large that the teeth were shipped back to England in barrels. Once in Britain, the teeth were sorted, boiled, and sold for use in the creation of a new prized possession - dentures.



Denture with human teeth, England, 1801-1860. Carved from ivory, this upper denture includes human front teeth. Ivory was an expensive material so such dentures could only have been afforded by wealthier people. The presence of human teeth adds a slightly sinister dimension

very stable in the mouth and was often tied to the patient's remaining teeth. Another problem that occurred with these dentures is that they tended not to last long and began to rot over time.

In 1723, French surgeon Pierre Fauchard published *The Surgeon Dentist, A Treatise on Teeth*, and became known as the Father of Modern Dentistry because his book was the first to describe a comprehensive system for looking after and treating the teeth. ■





Elongated Skulls

Elongated skulls have been found all across the ancient world from Europe to Australia, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Most scholars believe it was a deliberate ritual, known as cranial deformation, in which the shape of the skull is altered via binding the head in cloth or between two pieces of wood. It was usually carried out on infants between one and six months of age. The practice is thought to have been used to signify group affiliation or status. But there have also been examples of elongated skulls belonging to newborn babies and even those found in utero. Some populations, such as the Paracas people of Peru, may have had elongated skulls as a natural condition. Cranial deformation continues to be practiced among some indigenous people in the world today.



ODD Burials

Hybrid Human-Animal Skeletons and Frankenstein Mummies!

|| By Mark Miller

Two thousand years ago, in a small, industrious Iron Age settlement in Dorset, England, a young woman was sacrificed. Her throat was most likely slit before her body was placed on a 'bed' of animal bones that came from cattle, sheep, dogs and horses. They had been deliberately placed to mirror the bones of the dead woman. For example, animal skull fragments were placed beneath her head, while animal leg bones were arranged beneath her own legs.

Other burials in the settlement, which were unearthed in 2015, also displayed a strange mix of animal remains placed in perplexing combinations, where the bones of different animals were intentionally combined in what is

reminiscent of the mythological beasts and chimeras of ancient cultures.

The excavations at North West Farm near Winterborne Kingston, Dorset, led by Bournemouth University archaeologists, Dr. Miles Russell and Paul Cheetham, revealed a Celtic settlement, inhabited from 100 BC to 10 BC, consisting of 150 to 200 round houses. The inhabitants of the settlement, the Durotriges, engaged in a variety of industries, including pottery, textile manufacturing, and iron, lead, and copper works.

The ancient Celts were also animists who honored the forces of nature and believed that certain animals were messengers of the spirits or gods.

Dr. Russell explained at the time of the discovery that investigations led them to believe that life in the settlement was peaceful and prosperous. There were no signs of defensive palisades or ramparts.

“The sacrifice of so many animals and the unusual treatment of their bones is likely to shed totally new light on Iron Age belief systems – and may suggest that the Ancient Britons had beliefs or mythologies which involved hybridized animals, just as the ancient Greeks had,” Dr. Russell said.

The hybridized animal forms found at the site include a cow that was apparently sacrificed and then had its legs replaced by horse's legs; a sacrificed sheep with its own head plus a bull's head on its rear end; a horse with cow's horns placed in an inward direction on its head; and a cow leg with a horse's hoof. There were two examples of a jawless cow skull which had been paired with a horse's lower jaw, and a complete dog skeleton that had three cow lower jaws radiating from it.

Dr. Russell suggested that the Durotriges people were creating combinations of prized animals, which they placed as offerings to their deities. However, there is no record of the names or nature of these gods and what was involved in this ritual.

Most of these sacrificed and combined animals were in storage pits under entrances to the ancient houses on the site. The sacrifices appear to have been made in the late first century BC, possibly as decommissioning rituals done as the homes and settlement were being abandoned.

The complex rituals of the Durotriges were effectively wiped out with the arrival of the Romans. ■

To learn more, visit the Durotriges Project led by Bournemouth University.

- 1 Cow skull with horse jaw
- 2 Horse skulls
- 3 Cow torso with horse legs
- 4 Cow burial being excavated

Photos from the excavation of the Iron Age settlement dug as part of the Durotriges Project, courtesy Dr. Miles Russell | © Durotriges Project Bournemouth University



The Durotriges were a Celtic tribal confederation who inhabited an area that equates with modern-day Dorset, and parts of Wiltshire, Somerset and Devon, prior to the Roman invasion of 43 AD. They actively resisted the Romans but were defeated in a series of battles. By 70 AD, the Durotriges were effectively Romanized, their culture and identity eradicated, and their people assimilated within the Roman province of Britannia.

Above Left: Celtic gold stater, Durotriges tribe



Photos © Durotriges Project Bournemouth University



Photo courtesy © Professor Michael Parker Pearson



Why Did Ancient Scots Prepare “Frankenstein” Mummies?

In 2001, archaeologists found a male and a female skeleton on the island of South Uist in the Outer Hebrides in Scotland. Although the male had died around 1600 BC, he had not been buried until six centuries later, around 1000 BC. Similarly, the female was not buried until 300 years after her death. Using modern forensic techniques, it was found that the outer two millimeters of the bone had been demineralized, which is consistent with preservation caused by submersion in a peat bog for between 6 and 18 months. Evidence suggests that the bodies were purposely preserved and later retrieved from the bog and set up inside a dwelling.

However, in a surprise discovery, DNA examination of the remains revealed the two skeletons were actually made up of body parts from six different individuals! In the male, the torso, skull, neck, and lower jaw belonged to three separate men, while the female was a composite of a male skull, a female torso, and the arm of a third person. It appears that the mummies were made up of parts from people in the same families and then put together like a jigsaw to create a ‘symbolic ancestor’.

Professor Mike Parker Pearson, at the time an archaeologist at the University of Sheffield, maintained that the mummies played an important role in ancestral worship, to provide spiritual guidance to the community.

PART HUMAN

Part Animal

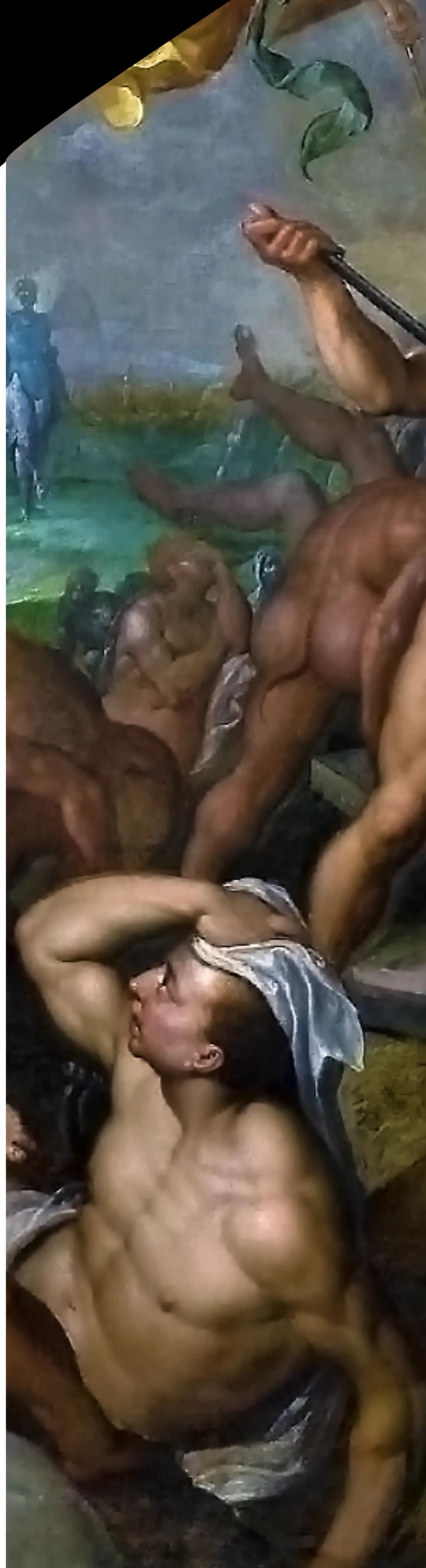
THERIANTHROPE IN MYTHOLOGY, FOLKLORE, AND MODERN CULTURE

INTERVIEW WITH DR. NEIL RUSHTON

BY DR. MICKI PISTORIUS

*T*here is a long, deeply embedded tradition in mythology, folklore, and visual and written representations, of therianthropic entities – usually part human, part animal, but the definition can extend to other weird and wonderful humanoid creatures. These entities make appearances in every global culture and, despite their relegation to previous ideologies by a modern rationalistic worldview, they continue to make their presence felt in some 21st-century belief systems.

Dr. Neil Rushton is an archaeologist and author who completed his PhD at Trinity College, University of Cambridge. He has worked in academia and for various heritage organizations in the UK and is now a full-time author. In his spare time, he shares his research on mythological and folkloric tales through his website.





MP: Have therianthropes shared a co-existence with mankind since the dawn of time?

NR: Graham Hancock has called prehistoric rock art 'the earliest folklore'. The painted depictions frequently portray therianthropes, and they date back to the Paleolithic period in Europe and Asia. The earliest known example is from Indonesia in a cave complex known as Leang Bulu Sipong 4, which has been dated circa 42,000 BC. The panels show distorted humanoids with bird-heads and tails hunting pigs and buffalo. One of the lead researchers suggested: "The images of therianthropes may represent the earliest evidence for our capacity to conceive of things that do not exist in the natural world, a basic concept that underpins modern religion."

There is certainly a myriad of therianthropes represented in European Paleolithic rock art, the earliest dating from circa 35,000 BC. One of the most well-known is the image from the cave of the Trois-Frères in France, where the painting now known as 'The Sorcerer' shows a half-human, half deer therianthrope, dated to circa 13,000 BC. The artists of the Palaeolithic period were evidently tapping into numinous states of consciousness, where therianthropic entities were seen to exist within their worldview.



Left: The Sorcerer, depicting a half-human, half-deer therianthrope

Opposite: A bull painting, made with ochre, discovered in Lubang Jeriji Saléh cave, Borneo, Indonesia, dated to be 40,000 years old



What were the most common therianthropes in Classical mythology?

In Classical Greek and Roman mythology, the most conspicuous therianthropes were satyrs (φᾱῦνος) and fauns, usually portrayed as half-human, half-goat. The preeminent of these was Pan. Although Pan's origins may possibly be traced back to a Proto-Indo-European deity, his first appearance in literature comes from Arcadia in the eastern part of the Peloponnese peninsula. The poet Pindar (circa 518–438 BC) describes him being worshipped as a minor god — always in natural surroundings rather than inbuilt edifices. Pan's allegorical influence has been great — his naturalistic attributes can perhaps be seen to represent the force of nature and sexuality; he is often shown in art with an extended phallus and engaging in intercourse with nymphs, humans and even goats. This extended well beyond the Classical period, and Pan came to embody function and meaning within nature, where his half-animal, half-human form symbolizes the oneness of humanity and the environment. This idea was tapped into by Margaret Murray in her 1933 book *The God of the Witches*, where she suggested Pan (along with his Celtic equivalent, Cernunnos) was a nature God worshipped throughout Europe in the Medieval and Early-Modern periods by an underground culture of witches, who used him for their shamanic practices.

Folklore abounds with fables of faeries – creatures with wings - and there are many narratives in Medieval history of witches turning into animals. Could this be an extension of the prehistoric shamanic practice of shapeshifting experiences?

There is a lot of evidence pointing to the continuance of prehistoric shamanic practices in medieval and Early-Modern witchcraft. The authors Carlo Ginzburg and Emma Wilby have demonstrated that many of the witch cults of this period utilized altered states of consciousness to achieve their ritualistic endeavors. While the reports from witch trials (the primary documentary source for an understanding of the sub-

Pan was a nature God worshipped throughout Europe by an underground culture of witches, who used him for their shamanic practices

cultures operating under the radar of Christianity) need to be interpreted with much caution, it would seem as if many of the witches were either able to attain metaphysical therianthrope bodies in order to travel to Sabbaths, or they relied on familiars, which were either animals or therianthropes. These were most often described as faeries, who ranged in appearance from humanoids to animal hybrids.

During a compendious outpouring of confessions during her trial for witchcraft in Scotland in 1662, Isobel Gowdie (for once, without torture, and fully backed-up by her co-accused) told her interrogators that after anointing herself with certain 'unctions,' she shape-shifted before flying to the Sabbath. Her zoomorphism allegedly changed her for a time into half-human, half-hare, all facilitated by a therianthrope faerie creature. Her experience would appear to be metaphysical and numinous (enabled by the 'unctions') and may allow a projection back to the roots of the geneses of therianthrope entities in rock art and Classical tropes. There was evidently a deep-seated belief-system among the accused witches, which placed therianthrope metaphysics in a position of central importance.

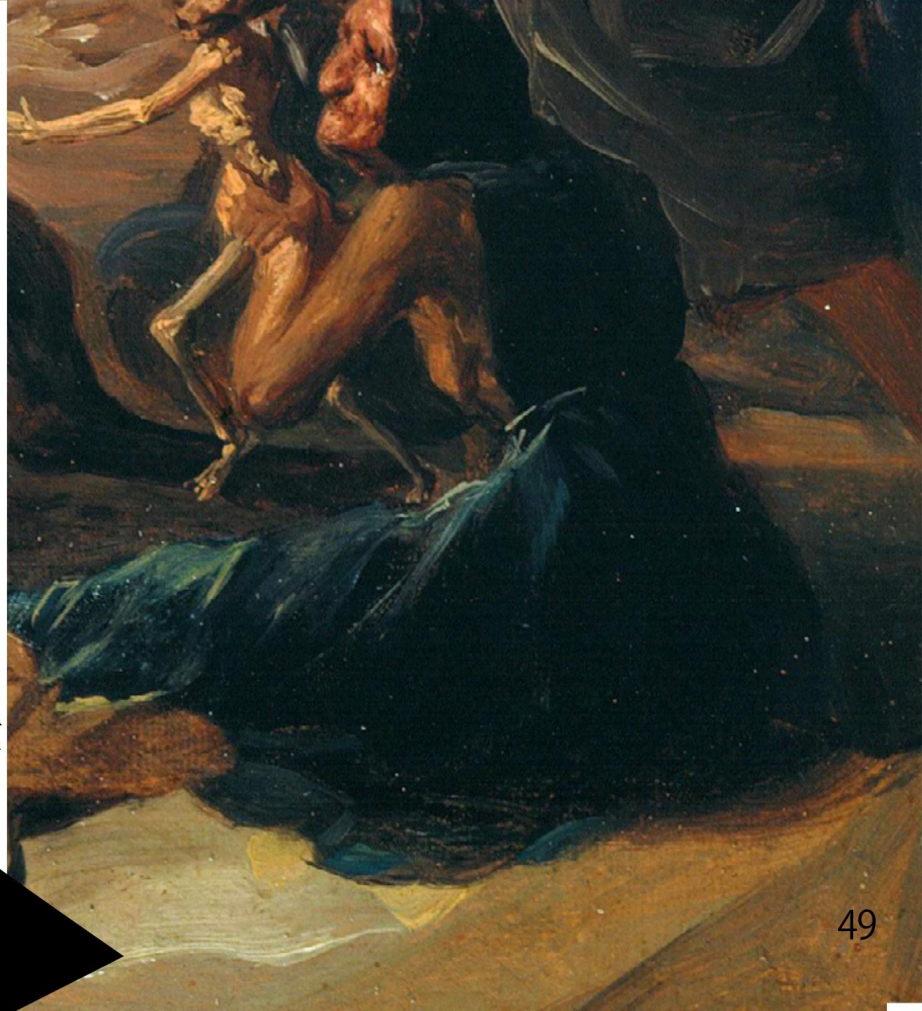


WereTiger, 1763



The otherworldly creatures most often known as faeries have taken many forms over the centuries, and interact with humanity in a myriad of ways. Are they nothing but the nebulous hallucinations of gullible people, turned into folktales by imaginative storytellers, or are they messengers of deeper meaning accessed by both mystics and the unwary in altered states of consciousness? Maybe both, and much more.

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Therianthropes were abundant in ancient rock paintings, but is there evidence of modern encounters and a persistence of this phenomenon embedded in the collective subconscious of humans?

Encounters with therianthropic entities continue in the modern period. Testimonies come from a variety of sources. Robert Ogilvie Crombie has described his psychic meetings with Pan in the Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh in the 1960s, and a recent survey by The Fairy Investigation Society has shown that many people continue to report encounters with creatures that often morph between human and animal. Perhaps

the most intriguing evidence comes from people who have altered their states of consciousness with entheogenic compounds. This evidence is disparate but includes clinical research studies, such as the five-year program carried out by Dr. Rick Strassman at the University of New Mexico. After being injected with varying doses of N,N-Dimethyltryptamine (DMT), the participants reported submersion into an alternate reality, inhabited by a range of entities, including beings that could be described as therianthropes, and which could be codified with the descriptions in Palaeolithic rock art, Classical tropes and Medieval and Early-Modern witch trials. These types of experience may give clues as to the geneses

of the therianthropic entities described in cultural collectives over a very long time period. While therianthropes do not seem to exist as part of our physical reality, perhaps they do pertain within a collective human consciousness and, if individual consciousness is altered from its normal perception, the collective is tapped into, rendering their appearance in different guises. And if consciousness is primary (as opposed to a reductionist, material primacy) then perhaps these therianthropic entities can be seen as manifestations of human interactions with a variety of realities, melding with an amorphous mythological worldview when certain conditions are met. ■

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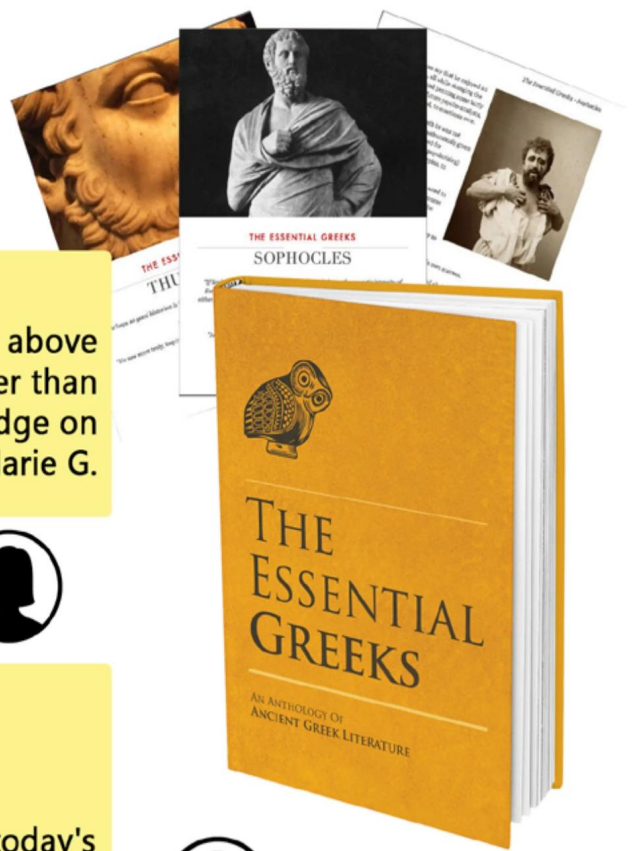


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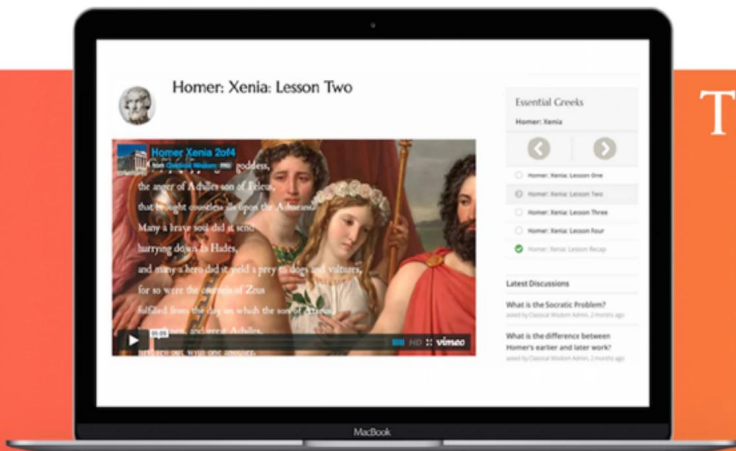
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STIGMATA: HEAVENLY SIGNS OR HOLY HOAXES?

|| BY ALICIA MCDERMOTT

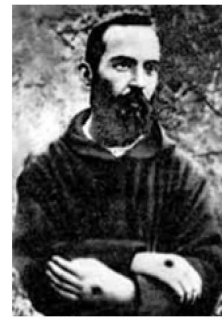
Stigmata is the appearance of marks or wounds like the ones Jesus received during the Crucifixion. These typically appear on hands and feet, as if caused by nails pierced through the flesh. Sometimes there are marks on the side, like a wound from a lance, and hairline, as if from a crown of thorns.

Some stigmatics feel the pain of these wounds, but lack markings – this is called ‘invisible stigmata.’ Other stigmatics’ wounds do not clot. Their blood is sometimes documented to have a pleasant smell called the “Odor of Sanctity” - the aroma of violets, lilies, roses, incense, or fresh tobacco.

The idea of wounds inexplicably appearing on one’s body would be terrifying for most people. But stigmatics, who are often devout Roman Catholics, generally see this as a blessing — a sign they have been specially chosen by God to suffer the same wounds as his Son.

The first documented stigmata case was on September 14, 1224 AD by St Francis of Assisi after 40 days of fasting and praying. He reportedly saw a six-winged angel bearing the wounds of the Crucifixion and then received the marks on his hands, feet, and side. The wounds stayed and bled continually until he died two years later. After studying accounts of St Francis’s symptoms, it has been suggested that the marks may have been a severe case of malignant malaria – the hemorrhaging of purple blood into the skin - a condition often symmetrically present in the hands and feet.

The most famous case after St Francis was the Capuchin monk and Italian saint, Francesco Forgione, aka Padre Pio. For 50 years he was linked to stigmata.



Francesco Forgione (Padre Pio) showing the stigmata, 1919

He also allegedly could levitate, bilocate (be in two places at once), and provide miraculous healings. However, he was found to have copied his experiences verbatim from writings of an earlier stigmata case.

Critics say there are almost no stigmata cases in which wounds are seen forming. An exception is an Italian woman who was filmed by her psychotherapist as marks were shown spontaneously appearing while she was in a “trance state.”

Another cause for debate is the position of wounds. Early stigmatics showed wounds on their hands, but when scientists declared that Romans crucified people by driving a nail into the arm just above the wrist, the wound position changed. Stigmatics have also never undergone X-rays, which would definitively show whether a wound truly pierces a limb.

Most cases are declared hoaxes with wounds being self-inflicted, sometimes unknowingly, while the person is in an altered state of consciousness, perhaps brought on by extensive fasting or praying. Even the Catholic Church has been hesitant to accept the phenomenon as a miracle – even in St. Francis’s case. ■

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BLEMMYES:

The Headless Men of Mythology

Il By Wu Mingren



The Blemmyes are bizarre creatures rumored, in antiquity and later, to inhabit remote parts of the world. Their origins began as a tribe inhabiting the lower parts of Nubia, but later became fictionalized as a race of creatures believed to be acephalous (headless) monsters with eyes and mouths on their chest.

The Blemmyes were first described 2,500 years ago in *The Histories*, written by the fifth century BC Greek historian Herodotus: “headless creatures with eyes in their chests (at least, that is what the Libyans say)”. According to Herodotus, these creatures inhabit the western part of Libya,

which is supposed to be “very hilly and thickly wooded, and teems with wildlife”. In addition to these headless creatures, this part of the world is said to be the home of such strange creatures as enormous snakes, donkeys with horns, and dog-headed creatures, all of which, the historian tells his audience, are “not merely the stuff of fables”. Herodotus, however, does not give these headless creatures of Libya a name.

The name ‘Blemmyes’ can be found in *The Geography* of Strabo. This first-century Greek geographer describes the Blemmyes not as strange monsters, but as a tribe inhabiting the lower parts of Nubia, along the Nile towards the Red Sea.

Continued next page



It is in the work of the Roman writer Pliny the Elder that we see the Blemmyes of Strabo equated with the headless creatures of Herodotus. In *Natural History*, Pliny records that “The Blemmyæ are said to have no heads, their mouths and eyes being seated in their breasts”.

Like Herodotus, Pliny’s knowledge of the Blemmyes is also based on hearsay. Additionally, Pliny’s view of geography is similar to that of Herodotus, in which the edges of the known world are inhabited by strange creatures. For instance, Pliny also wrote about the Himantopodes, “a race of people with feet resembling thongs, upon which they move along by nature with a serpentine, crawling kind of gait”.

The story of the Blemmyes survived into the Middle Ages, and makes an appearance, albeit in a slightly modified form, in a 14th-century work known as *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. Although they are not named as Blemmyes, Mandeville describes these creatures as “folk of foul stature and of cursed kind that have no heads. And their eyes be in their shoulders”. Mandeville does not place them in Africa, however, but on an island in Asia, instead.

The 16th / 17th-century English explorer, Sir Walter Raleigh, also provides an account of creatures resembling the Blemmyes. Raleigh reports that the creatures “are called Ewaipanoma; they are reported to have their eyes in their shoulders, and their mouths in the middle of their breasts, and that a long train of hair groweth backward between their shoulders”. Unlike Herodotus or Pliny or Mandeville, Raleigh claims that these headless beings

live in Guiana, in South America. Although Raleigh had not seen the Ewaipanoma himself, he believed that they were real, based on accounts that he deemed reliable.

Today, very few would seriously believe in the existence of such a creature as the Blemmyes. Nevertheless, this has not stopped speculation about what made the ancient authors write about such beings. One explanation is that the Blemmyes were human

beings with their heads set deep in the shoulders or a tribe of people with shoulders raised to extreme heights, an anatomical modification that may have been done on their infants. Yet another theory is that the traditional desert garb and headdress (as worn by the Bedouin and other desert nomads) of the Blemmyes might have given the ancient writers the wrong impression that these people were headless. ■

Secreted away beneath the floor of an English cathedral was a large calfskin canvas featuring what, at first glance, appeared to be a map of the world.

The Hereford Mappa Mundi was found to date to 1285 AD. While a myriad of cities and towns are depicted on the Medieval map, more than 500 ink drawings illustrate biblical events, exotic plants and animals, wild and strange creatures, and classical myths. More than just a map, the “Cloth of the World” remains one of the greatest surviving artworks of the Middle Ages.

The tangled ink illustrations reflect a Medieval European understanding of the known world at the time—and also the unknown world of the supernatural—highlighting not just the human world,

but entire bestiaries of horrifying mythical creatures. Various strange and wonderful people are represented on the map, both real and unreal.

Likely due to exaggerated traveler tales of dangerous foreign cultures, 32 images depict outrageous people, including the Blemmyes.



Other beings include the Sciapods, or Monoculi, human-like creatures with a giant, single foot. They were believed to use their large foot to shield themselves from the sun. Troglodites, or cave-dwellers, are depicted as snake-eating, bearded men who ride goat-like beasts; and Cynocephali are men with dog heads who were once believed to be an actual race of creatures living on Earth.

HISTORY

We inherit it, we make it,
and we are destined to
become part of it



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ODD (and wonderful!) BODY PARTS

Ingenuity
in the Use
of Ancient
Prostheses



The field of prosthetics is advancing at a rapid pace. Myoelectric limbs can now convert muscle movements to electrical signals; brain-computer interfaces allow a user to control their prosthesis with their minds; and some artificial body devices can now 'see' objects in front of them and react at high speed. Their appearance is also so life-like that it is difficult to distinguish the prosthesis from the real thing.

Prostheses would not be what they are today if it weren't for the ingenious inventions, and the numerous successes and failures in artificial body part development that have taken place over at least 3,000 years. And while the prosthetic limbs of the ancient world may seem primitive in comparison to what we have today, they were no less life-changing.

The Egyptian Noblewoman with a Wooden Toe

In 2000, researchers in Cairo, Egypt, unearthed a prosthetic big toe made of wood and leather which was attached to the almost 3,000-year-old mummy of an Egyptian noblewoman. The ancient Egyptians perceived the afterlife as a perfect version of this life, so it was important for them to go to the afterlife with body parts intact. This is evident in the fact that a variety of prosthetic devices have been found on mummies. These include feet, legs, noses, teeth, and even penises – yes, the ancient Egyptians believed that procreation

was an activity that was possible in the afterlife too!

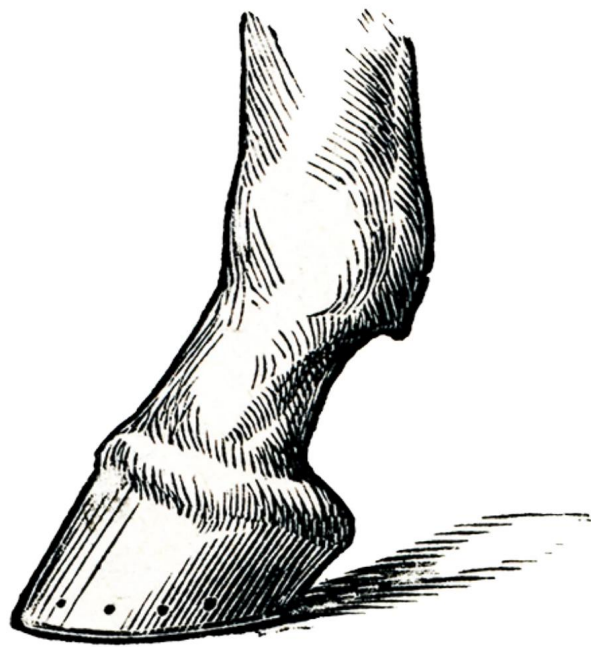
While this ideological belief may explain the presence of such prosthetic devices on mummies, some of the ancient Egyptian prosthetic devices may also have had a practical function. Analysis and demonstration of the prosthetic toe revealed that it would have made walking in the typical sandals of the time much easier. Researchers have hypothesized that the noblewoman also used the prosthesis while she was alive and did not just take it to her deathbed.

A variety of prosthetic devices have been found on mummies



A pair of Egyptian sandals from the reign of Amenhotep III, 1390 -1352BC

The Man with a Horse Hoof



A 2,200-year-old tomb unearthed in Turpan, China, revealed the remains of a man with a deformed leg. His patella, femur, and tibia were fused together and fixed at 80 degrees. The fusion may have been caused by joint inflammation, trauma, or rheumatism. An analysis revealed that at some point in his life, he had also been infected with tuberculosis. But the man, who was aged around 50 – 60 years at death, had found a unique way to compensate for his disability – he wore a horse hoof prosthesis!

The prosthetic leg was made of poplar wood and had 14 holes, seven on each side that allowed him to attach it to his upper leg with straps. The lower part was rendered into a cylindrical shape and was wrapped with a scrapped ox horn. Finally, a horse's hoof was fixed to the base, providing him with a durable 'foot' upon which to walk. The top of the prosthesis was severely worn, indicating that the man had worn it for many years.



An articulated wood and leather prosthetic leg of a Slovenian soldier wounded in World War I (1917)



Artificial peg leg, Europe, 1850-1900

This simple design of a 'peg leg' was often made by local craftsmen rather than specialist limb makers.

As the prosthesis has no knee joint, walking would have been difficult and the wearer was likely to have needed crutches as well.

The Warrior with a Dagger Hand

In the American post-apocalyptic horror television series, *The Walking Dead*, redneck hunter Merle Dixon fashions a knife attachment onto the stump where his hand used to be. While the storyline is nothing more than fictional horror, one ancient warrior had come up with the same frightening idea.

In 2018, Italian archaeologists discovered the 1400-year-old remains of a middle-aged man (Warrior T US 380) in the Longobard necropolis in Verona. Most of the male burials at Longobard contained skeletons with weapons and shields and many showed signs of cranial trauma, indicating they were warriors who most likely died in battle.

Warrior T US 380 had a well-healed amputated forearm and next to his arm bone was a buckle, organic material (probably decomposed leather), and a knife. A callus at the end of his amputated forearm suggests there was a biomechanical force placed on the stump, providing strong evidence that he wore the knife in place of his hand.



The Mummy with a Knee Screw



In 1971, the Rosicrucian Museum in California acquired a sealed ancient Egyptian coffin containing the well-preserved mummy of a high-status Egyptian male. More than two decades later, a team of scientists made a shocking discovery – the mummy displayed evidence of an advanced surgical procedure carried out nearly 2,600 years ago. Inside the mummy's left knee was a 9-inch metal orthopedic pin that had been inserted with such advanced biomechanical principles, that initially scientists could not distinguish it from a modern-day procedure.

The mummy was not the original owner of the

sarcophagus – it belonged to a priest named Usermontu ('the power of Montu'). Long after death, the mummy had been placed in Usermontu's coffin. Nevertheless, the mummy of unknown origin has come to be known by the name of the original sarcophagus owner.

Analysis of the embalming procedure revealed that 'Usermontu' was an upper-class Egyptian male who lived during the New Kingdom of Egypt (between 16th–11th century BC). While initial examinations led scientists to conclude that the metal pin had been placed in modern times to hold the mummy together, detailed analyses revealed this was not the case.

Professor C. Wilfred Griggs from Brigham Young University, Utah, and a team of experts, drilled into the bone to allow access for a tiny camera to examine the pin, and to extract samples of the bone and the metal. The scientific team found traces of ancient organic resin, similar to modern bone cement, as well as traces of ancient fats and textiles still held firmly in place. Extensive investigations revealed that the advanced procedure had been carried out in ancient times, approximately 2,600 years ago. The team members were astounded that the pin had been created with the same designs used today to create bone stabilization.

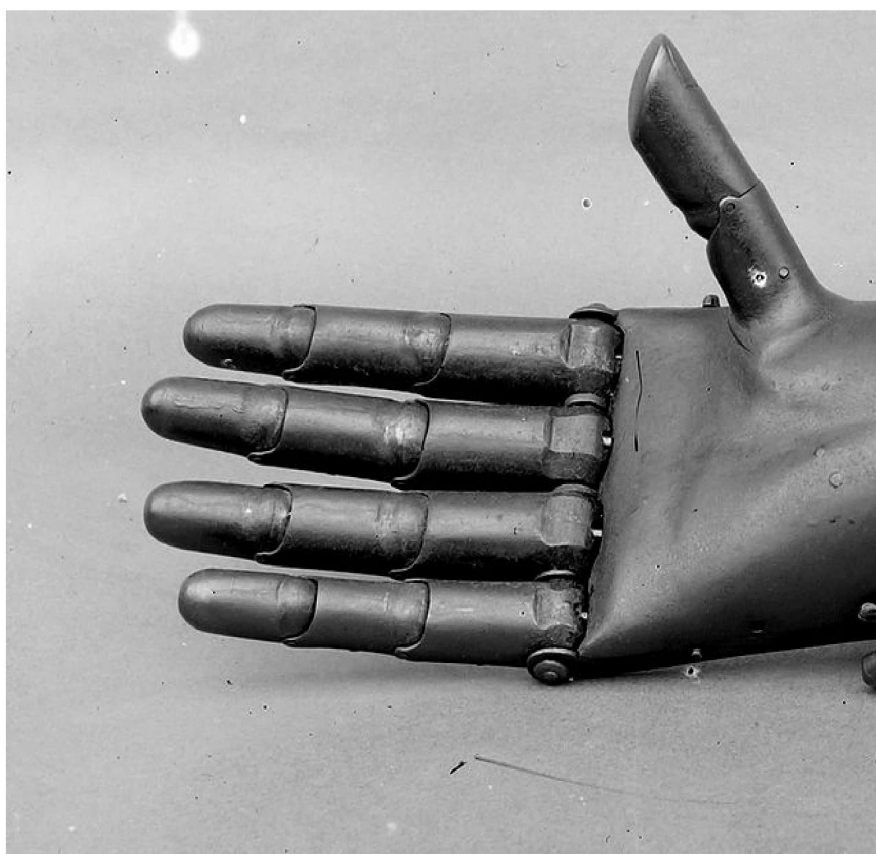
The Knight with an Iron Fist

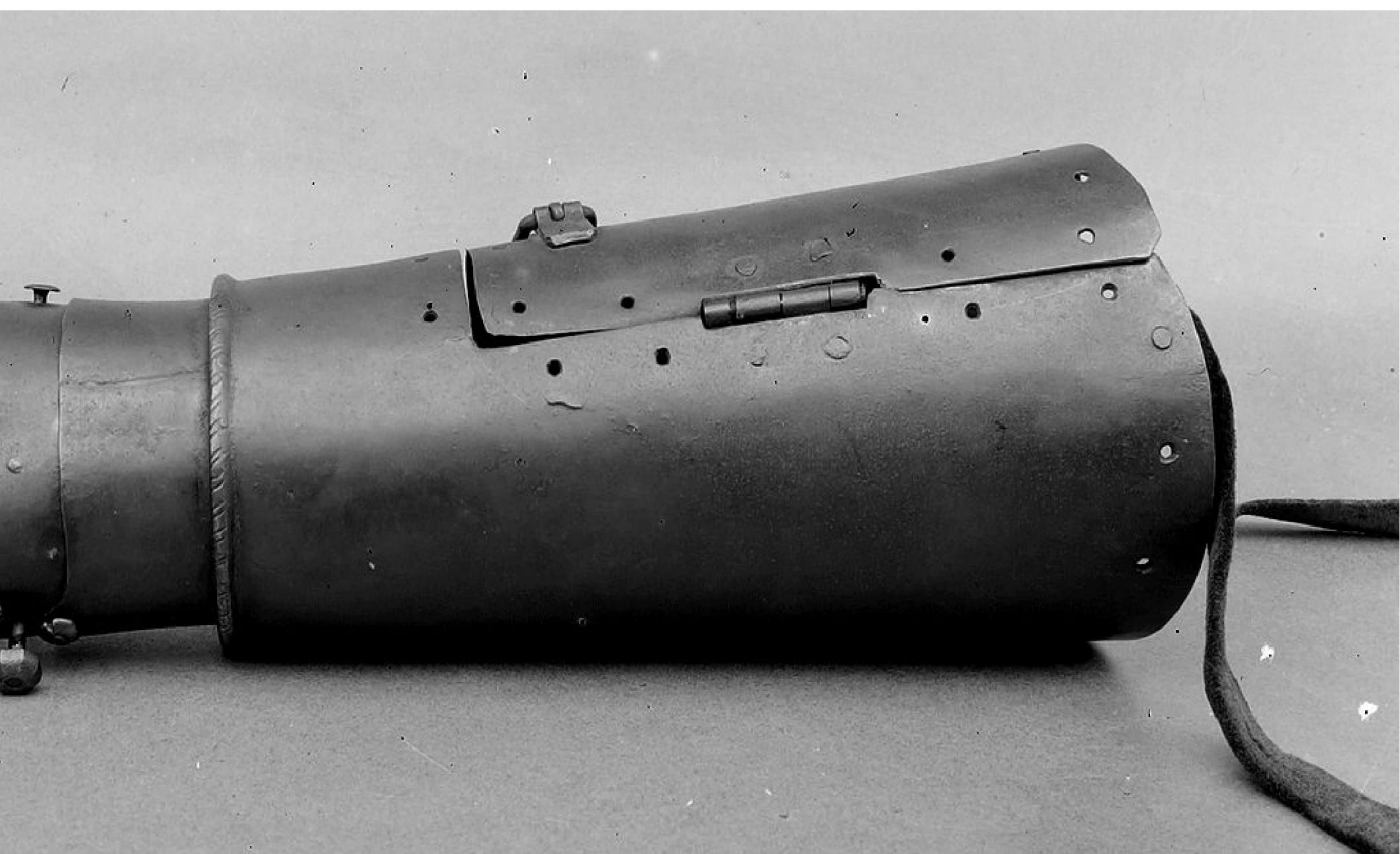
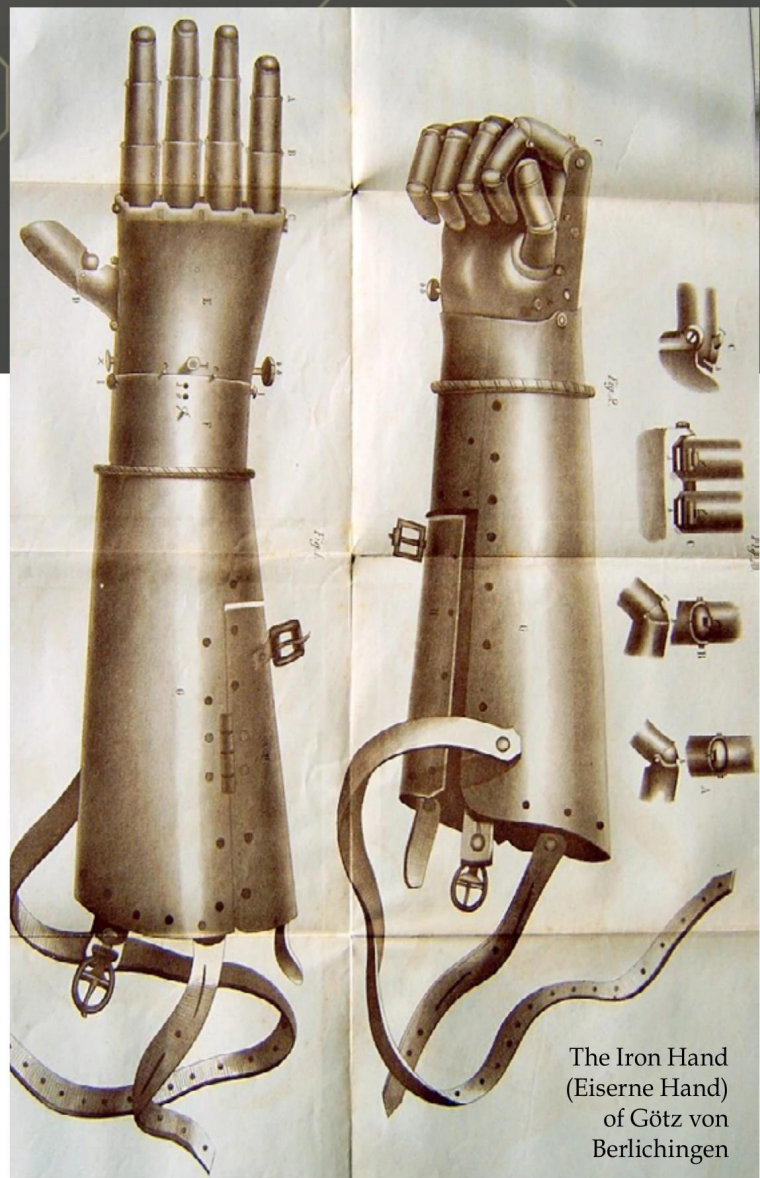
Götz von Berlichingen was a German mercenary knight who lived during the 16th century. In one particularly bloody battle that formed part of a War of Succession, von Berlichingen's right hand was injured so severely by a cannonball that it required amputation. Unwilling to give up his role as a revered warrior in the service of Albert IV, the Duke of Bavaria, he had a prosthetic hand fashioned out of iron. The device extended to the end of his forearm and was held in place with a leather strap. Spring-loaded mechanisms were placed within the joints, allowing the fingers to be locked in place. The prosthesis was so advanced for the era that he was able to wield a sword, grip the reins of his horse, and even hold a quill.

Von Berlichingen is said to have been an active soldier until the age of 64. He continued to fight in numerous battles and campaigns with his prosthetic hand, including that of the Holy Roman Emperor's war against the Ottoman Empire, and his invasion of France, as well as (on the side of the peasants) in the German Peasants' War. Von Berlichingen died in 1562 at the age of 82. ■

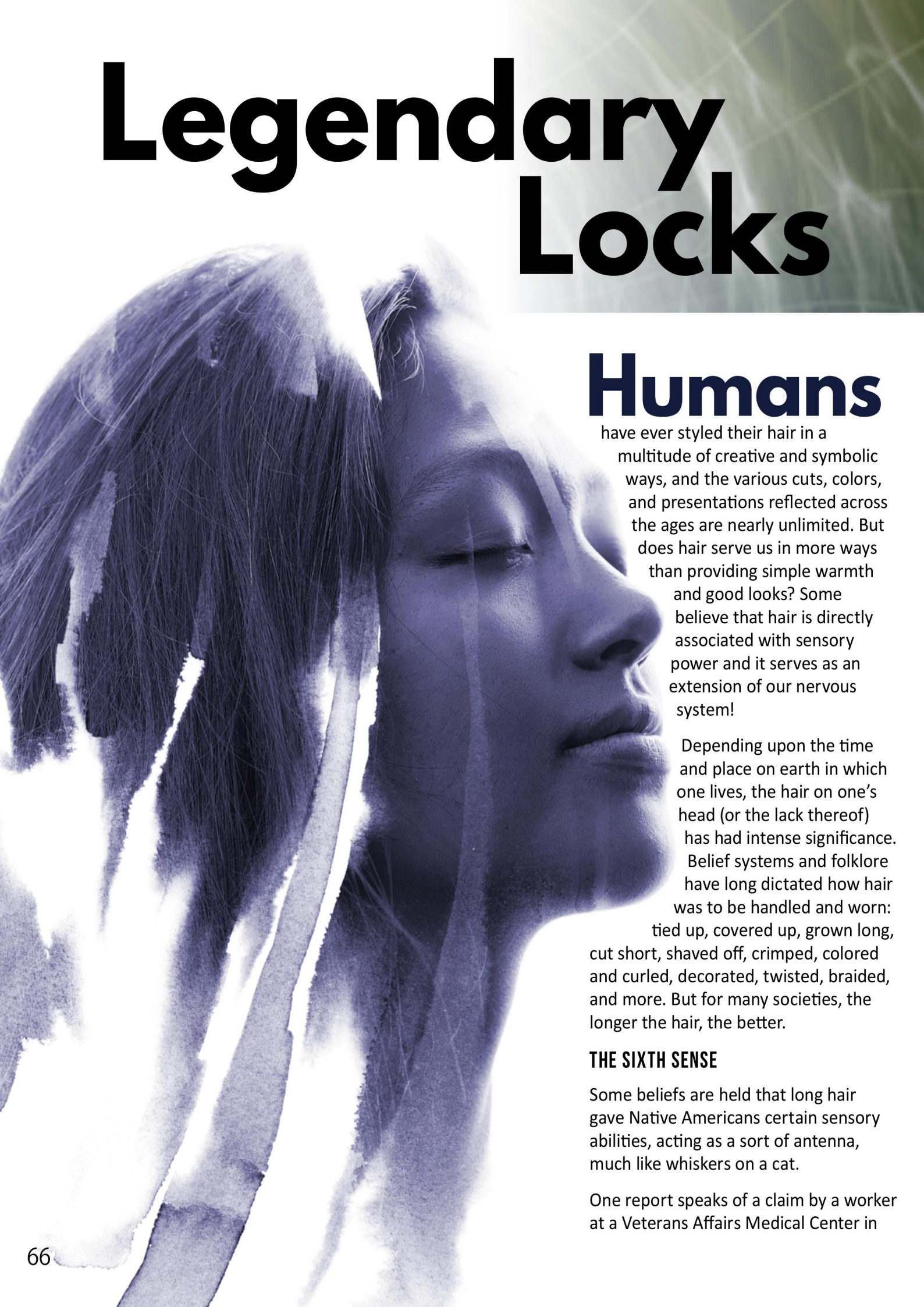


The prosthesis
was so advanced
for the era that
he was able to
wield a sword,
grip the reins of
his horse, and
even hold a quill





Legendary Locks



Humans

have ever styled their hair in a multitude of creative and symbolic ways, and the various cuts, colors, and presentations reflected across the ages are nearly unlimited. But does hair serve us in more ways than providing simple warmth and good looks? Some believe that hair is directly associated with sensory power and it serves as an extension of our nervous system!

Depending upon the time and place on earth in which one lives, the hair on one's head (or the lack thereof) has had intense significance. Belief systems and folklore have long dictated how hair was to be handled and worn: tied up, covered up, grown long, cut short, shaved off, crimped, colored and curled, decorated, twisted, braided, and more. But for many societies, the longer the hair, the better.

THE SIXTH SENSE

Some beliefs are held that long hair gave Native Americans certain sensory abilities, acting as a sort of antenna, much like whiskers on a cat.

One report speaks of a claim by a worker at a Veterans Affairs Medical Center in

Can Hair Act as a Sixth Sense, Protecting us from Danger?

|| By Liz Leafloor

the United States during the Vietnam War. It is alleged that, like the Choctaw and Navajo Native Americans known as 'Code Talkers' during both World Wars, talented scouts were sought to move stealthily through rough and dangerous terrain in conflict zones.

The enlisted recruits, who were well documented as having exceptional, almost supernatural tracking abilities" were said to not perform as expected in the field, and when questioned about the failures in performance, the older recruits explained that after they received haircuts, as per military standard, they could no longer sense their enemy or read subtle signs.

The report claims that government testing institutes compared the behaviors and tracking performances of Native American trackers with and without long hair. They found that the long-haired subjects outperformed those whose hair had been cut in military fashion. The suggested theory was that the long hair might have behaved as an extension of the nervous system, as, not unlike the way cat whiskers transmit information to the cat on the prowl as it approaches prey, the long hair acted like a sixth sense.

Skeptics challenge the claims, noting that no evidence has been found to show that hair is anything more than



Some believe that long hair gave Native Americans certain sensory abilities, acting like an antenna, or whiskers on a cat

dead cells (keratin proteins) and as such transmits nothing. However, strands stem out from our skin, and the follicle at the base is actually an organ that produces hair. Hair is connected to tactile receptors in the skin that tell us that it is cold or hot outside, let us feel the slightest breeze, or the annoying bug that is about to bite us, serving as a protective warning device.

When our hairs stand up on the back of our necks when we're in danger or feel threatened (known as goosebumps, or horripilation), is that a reflex of something we detect with our other senses, an unconscious perception affecting the hair? Or is it our hair affecting us, sending us a warning?

Certainly, many societies feel hair plays such an important role in our lives. The tale of the Native American trackers echoes the ancient biblical myth of Samson.



THE MIGHTY SAMSON

It was written in the Hebrew Bible that Samson, a Hercules-like figure with superhuman strength, was born a Nazirite with vows to abstain from wine, to have no contact with the dead, and to never cut a hair on his head. Nearly an undefeatable man—his superhuman abilities made him a powerful warrior, and he was able to rip lions apart—he did have a weakness which would lead to his undoing.

He fell in love with a woman (a Philistine, with whom the Israelites were at war) against the wishes of his parents. Delilah was tasked by her people to find out Samson's weakness, so as to defeat the hero that was said to protect the Israelites.

Samson revealed to her that it was his long hair that preserved his power, and once he fell asleep, Delilah shaved off his hair, breaking his vows. He awoke to find that his powers were gone, and he was quickly overpowered by the enemy—his eyes were gouged out and he was turned into a slave.

SYMBOLISM AND FOLKLORE OF HAIR

Perhaps the Native Americans trackers, with their strong convictions about long hair, lost confidence in their ability to track after cutting their hair. In many tribes, long hair is a symbol, an extension of the self, and the physical manifestation of thoughts.

In many cultures, the cutting of hair by oppressors was a punishment or humiliation, signifying defeat. The shaving off or complete loss of one's hair, even in modern society, often symbolizes a seismic shift within a person, whether spiritually,

psychologically, medically, or in the direction of their lives.

Various tribal hairstyles indicate which tribe one belonged to, and whether it was a time of war or peace. Different styles are used to demonstrate status and rank or were worn for certain ceremonies.

Health is often gauged by the condition of the hair, and illness or stress can be detected if it changes its nature or even falls out. Hair has always been an indicator of age as well, by color and texture, as well as by style. Free, unbound hair often symbolizes youth, and shorter, tied hair can symbolize a more mature demeanor. The tighter the binding, the more restricted or severe and powerful the impression portrayed.

It was held by many societies that hair, whether styled or not, had magical qualities.

Various nations of Native Americans have similar beliefs about hair. The Cree people are said to hold hair as an extension of the soul, and the style displays personality. Bear fat and soot were sometimes mixed and applied to hair to make it appear darker. The Mohawk, Pawnee, and Algonquin hairstyles are the inspiration for the dramatic haircut known as a Mohawk today, where the hair is shaved on the sides leaving a strip like a horse's mane.

It is believed that mourning and death are reasons to cut one's hair throughout many cultures.



In Britain, folklore holds that eating bread crusts will turn one's hair curly, and many old beliefs connect red hair with mischief or a fiery temperament. In Scotland, there is a proverb that if a magpie bird steals a person's cut hair and uses it for its nest then that person will die within a year. This is similar to beliefs in Lithuania, that birds collecting tufts of hair is the cause of headaches.

Buddhists practice the tradition of keeping short hair, or shaving their heads completely, to signify that they belong in the spiritual community. In contrast, many cultures' men and women who grow their hair long, like Samson, are even forbidden to cut it and must keep it covered due to religious observations.

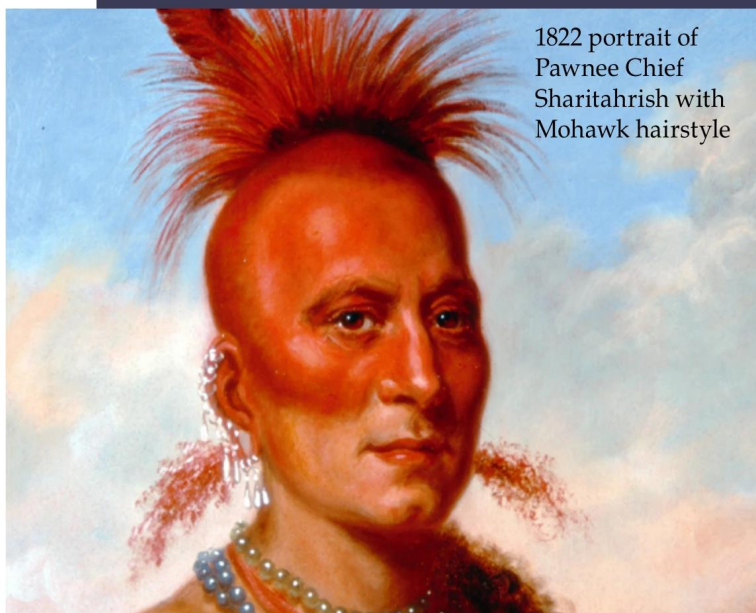
It is uncertain if human hair is part of our nervous system, communicating extra-sensory information to us, but what is certain is the styles in which we have worn our hair have always communicated something to others! ■



Samson was born a Nazirite with vows to abstain from wine, to have no contact with the dead, and to never cut a hair on his head



A Buddhist Monk with iconic shaved head



1822 portrait of Pawnee Chief Sharitahrish with Mohawk hairstyle

THE BRAIDED RAPUNZELS OF NAMIBIA



For the Mbalantu women of Namibia in Africa, traditions around the arrangement of hair are deeply imbued in every stage of life, from birth to puberty, marriage, childbirth, and finally death.

Preparation of the hair begins around the age of 12, when the hair undergoes a special treatment to drastically speed up hair growth. First, they coat their hair in a thick paste made from the finely ground tree bark of the omutyuula tree mixed with fat. A few years later, this paste is loosened to make the hair visible. Fruit pips are then tied to the hair ends with sinew strings.

When girls reach the age of sixteen, long sinew strands that reach the ground are attached to the hair. In the same year, they undergo the Ohango Initiation ceremony, when their hair is styled into four long, thick braids, known as eembuvi. The length of the hair is so important to Mbalantu women that some buy hair to attach to their own.

Once the girls complete their initiation ceremony, they are considered to be women. One of the greatest honors for a Mbalantu tribeswomen is when they are permitted to wear their hair as an elaborate headdress, which occurs when they are married.





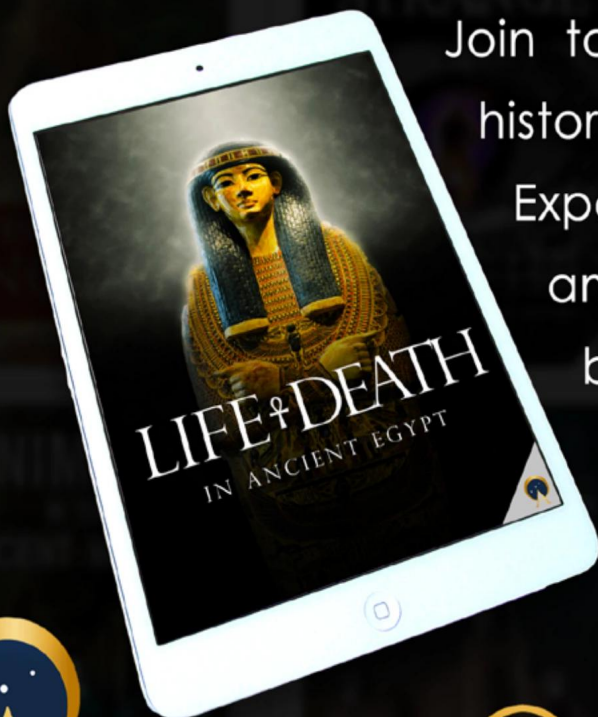
Kayan Neck Rings

The women of the Kayan Lahwi tribe in Myanmar are identified by the multitude of brass coils adorning their necks. From the age of five, coil upon longer coil is added. The process does not extend the neck, but rather pushes the collar bone down and compresses the rib cage. Reasons for this unusual apparel are to prevent the women from being captured for slavery; prevent tigers from attacking the neck; giving them the appearance of a dragon, an important figure in Kayan folklore, and simply for beauty's sake. The women themselves say it is to accentuate their cultural identity. The practice is discouraged by the government of Myanmar. In Thailand, however, the reverse trend is occurring, and the practice is gaining popularity. This is because it draws tourists, bringing revenue to the tribe.

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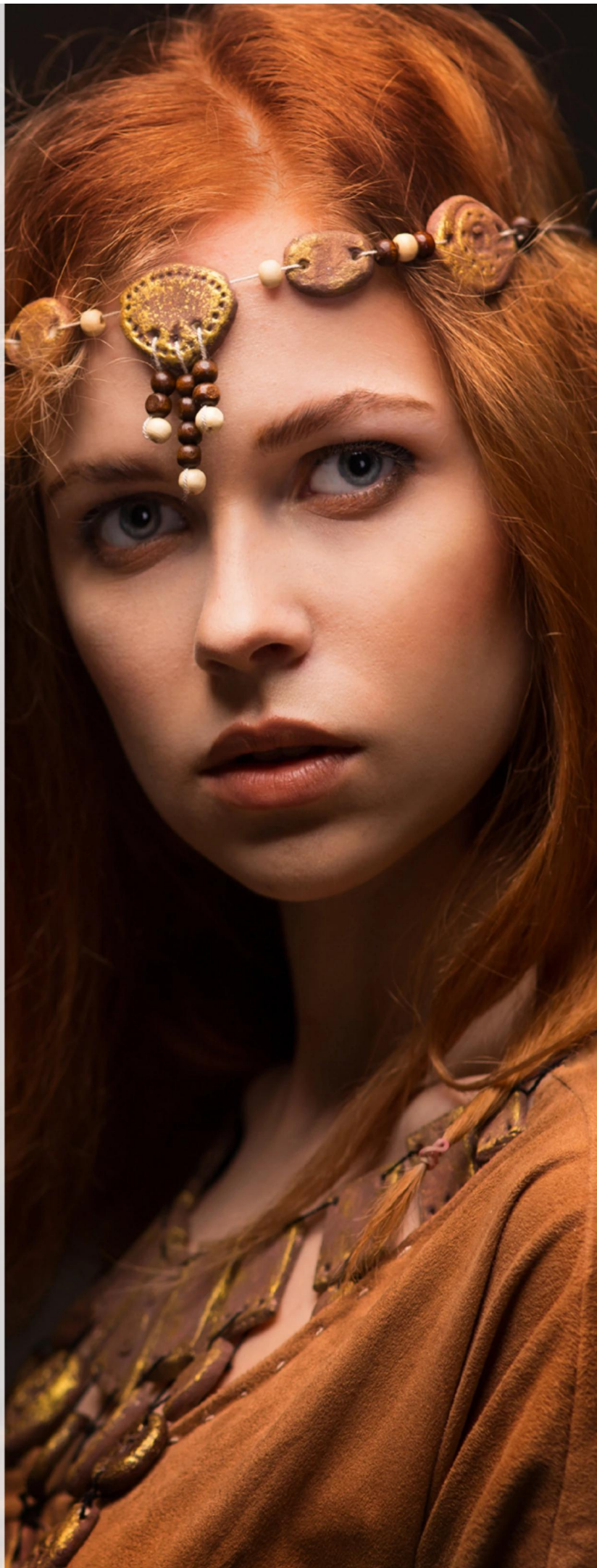
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Island in the Clouds



The Lost World of Mount Roraima

|| By Kerry Sullivan

Deep within the rainforests of Venezuela, a series of plateaus rise more than 9000 feet above the ground. From above, they look like islands in the sky. These are the *tepui*s (a Pemón Indian word for mountain), the most famous of which is called Mount Roraima. The tepuis are so unique in their geography that thousands of plant species exist nowhere else on the planet except on these plateaus.

The mystical mountains fascinated explorers and writers for centuries, most notably Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who described an ascent of Mount Roraima in his 1912 novel *The Lost World*. In Doyle's fictional novel, a group of explorers found that dinosaurs and other extinct creatures were still alive and well on the remote plateaus.

THE REAL LOST WORLD

Once impenetrable to all but the Pemón indigenous people, Mount Roraima really was a lost world. The mountain plateaus were already established when South America was linked with Africa to form the supercontinent Gondwana, meaning they were first formed perhaps 400 to 250 million years ago. During this time, molten rock forced its way up

through cracks in the sandstone landmass. At the same time, wind and water swept across Gondwana to erode the raised highlands into mountain ranges. The region would come to look much like it does now around 20 million years ago.

Because the tepuis have been isolated for so long atop their high, lonely plateaus, the flora and fauna of the tepuis provide an organic illustration of the processes of evolution. It is guessed that "at least half of the estimated 10,000 plant species here are unique to tepuis and surrounding lowlands. New species are still being discovered." (George, 1989). Although all of the tepuis have been climbed, only a few have been extensively explored. Could this mean that supposedly extinct species may still exist atop these remote plateaus?

LEGENDS OF RORAIMA

The Roraima plateaus are so remote and so unique that it is not difficult to imagine Sir Arthur Conan Doyle creating a world alive with prehistoric plants and dinosaurs in his novel *The Lost World*. Doyle was fascinated with the accounts of British botanist

Everard Im Thurn, who climbed to the top of Mount Roraima in December 1884.

Ascending Mount Roraima in 1989 for the National Geographic Society, German explorer Uwe George said, "None of us who followed Im Thurn to Roraima have found primordial creatures or their fossil remains there, but the terrain is so difficult that only a fraction of the tepui's 44 square miles has so far been explored" (George, 1989). Since his writing, more of Mount Roraima has been investigated and, unsurprisingly, no traces of dinosaurs have been found.

SACRED GROUND

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the natives of Venezuela viewed the tepuis as having special mythical significance. According to the Pemón Indians, Mount Roraima is "the stump of a mighty tree that once held all the fruits and tuberous vegetables in the world," however it was "felled by one of their ancestors, the tree crashed to the ground, unleashing a terrible flood" (Naeem, 2011). They believed that if a person ascended to the top of the tepuis, he or she would not come back alive.

Continued on next page



A CRYSTAL MOUNTAIN COVERED WITH DIAMONDS

Climbing the tepuis is exceedingly difficult and is made more so by the frequent rains that make the rocky footpaths slippery and muddy. The first European explorer to write about the tepuis was Sir Walter Raleigh in 1595. He wrote of a crystal mountain covered with diamonds and waterfalls.

“There falleth ouer it a mightie riuier which toucheth no parte of the side of the mountaine but...falleth to the grounde with a terrible noyse and clamor, as if 1000 great belles were knockt one against another...but what it hath I knowe not, neyther durst he or any of his men ascende to the toppe of the saide mountaine, those people adioyning being his enemies (as they were) and the way to it so impassible.” (Raleigh quoted in George, 1989).

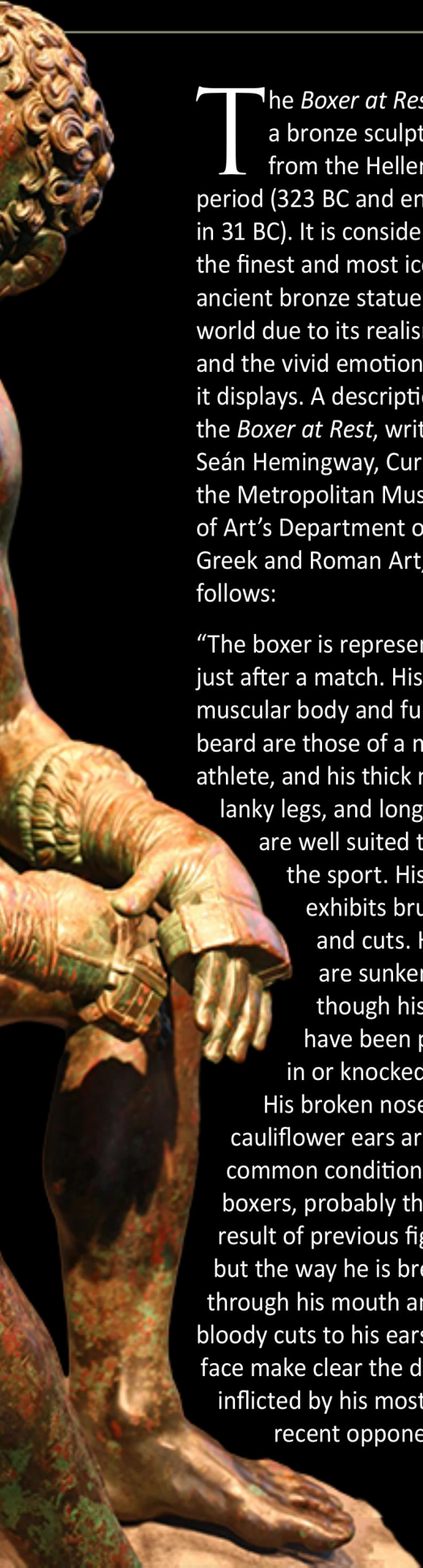
There is a good chance that Sir Raleigh was describing Angel Falls, so named for the mid-20th century American Jimmie Angel who was the first person to fly over the area. Angel Falls were recently featured in Disney’s *Up*, where the falls are referred to as Paradise Falls.

While today’s travelers may not stumble upon dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures, they will be able to see black frogs and tarantulas that exist nowhere else on the planet. It is believed there are many other species unique to Roraima that are yet to be discovered. ■



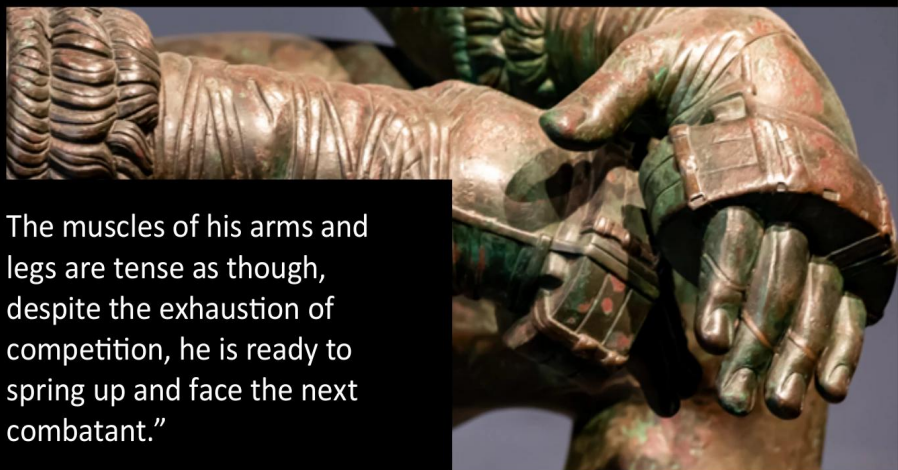
BOXER AT REST

|| BY WU MINGREN



The *Boxer at Rest* is a bronze sculpture from the Hellenistic period (323 BC and ending in 31 BC). It is considered the finest and most iconic ancient bronze statue in the world due to its realism, and the vivid emotions that it displays. A description of the *Boxer at Rest*, written by Seán Hemingway, Curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Department of Greek and Roman Art, is as follows:

"The boxer is represented just after a match. His muscular body and full beard are those of a mature athlete, and his thick neck, lanky legs, and long arms are well suited to the sport. His face exhibits bruises and cuts. His lips are sunken as though his teeth have been pushed in or knocked out. His broken nose and cauliflower ears are common conditions of boxers, probably the result of previous fights, but the way he is breathing through his mouth and the bloody cuts to his ears and face make clear the damage inflicted by his most recent opponent.



The muscles of his arms and legs are tense as though, despite the exhaustion of competition, he is ready to spring up and face the next combatant."

The *Boxer at Rest* was discovered during an excavation that was carried out at Quirinal Hill in Rome in 1885 AD. It was found carefully deposited in the foundations of an ancient building situated not far from the Baths of Constantine. When it was unearthed, it stunned the world. Rodolfo Lanciani, an Italian archaeologist who witnessed the discovery, wrote about the emotions he felt as the sculpture emerged from the earth:

"I have witnessed, in my long career in the active field of archaeology, many discoveries; I have experienced surprise after surprise; I have sometimes and most unexpectedly met with real masterpieces; but I have never felt such an extraordinary impression as the one created by the sight of this magnificent specimen of a semi-barbaric

athlete, coming slowly out of the ground, as if awakening from a long repose after his gallant fights."

During the Hellenistic period, bronze pieces were quite common. The lost-wax casting process not only made fine detailing of sculptures possible, but also allowed multiple copies of the artwork to be produced. However, surviving examples are rare – only between 100 and 200 are known today. This is because bronze was a valuable metal and sculptures were melted down to make coins or weapons.

The *Boxer at Rest* may have been hidden away to prevent it from falling into the hands of invaders. If this were the case, it is likely that its owners did not have the chance to retrieve it, thereby inadvertently preserving it for the future. ■



**ALICIA
MCDERMOTT**

Alicia is a researcher, editor, and writer with Ancient Origins. She's a lifelong learner and has worked in education, tourism, and anthropology. Traveling throughout Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador, Alicia has increased her knowledge of Pre-Colombian sites as well as life in modern Andean cultures.

The United Nations has dubbed quinoa a “supercrop” because they believe the hardy plant could help remedy world hunger. Nutritionists have also declared it a superfood because it’s so nourishing. Although there was a long period of history when quinoa was forgotten

and looked down upon, the ancient Inca people would have rejoiced at these statements and recognition of their precious foodstuff. For them, quinoa was considered "The Mother Grain;" it was a life-giving seed delivered from the heavens by a sacred bird to nourish their people.

Quinoa (keen-wah) was such an important part of the Inca diet that the mighty Sapa (Emperor) participated in a yearly ritual of planting the first quinoa seed each spring with his golden staff. Warriors also relied on the food to keep their spirits up and energy high while on highland campaigns. Quinoa was the staple food of the Inca empire, it was the “chisaya mama” (mother grain) and ritual sacrifices were given to the gods to keep the harvest bountiful.

Quinoa is a seed, but these days we like to pretend it’s a grain, since it’s often used that way. Even before it was cherished by the Inca culture,



A Mother ‘Grain’ From the Heavens to Your Plate!

wild quinoa was consumed by the ancient Andean Tiahuanaco culture. They also saw the importance of quinoa and even depicted it on their pottery. Other Pre-Columbian people took quinoa with them into the afterlife and it has been found in tombs of Tarapacá, Calama and Arica in Chile, and in different regions of Peru.

Experts believe this “ancient grain,” as it is so fondly referred to today, has been cultivated since 5000 BC. Quinoa has thrived where many plants cannot - in the arid and semi-arid regions of the Andes Mountains. People in this region have also domesticated the plant into different strains that can survive in various atmospheres and for different uses. For

example, the *Chullpi* variety is used primarily for soups, and the *Kcancollas* strain is known to be better at resisting drought.

Outside the culinary realm, Pre-Hispanic people traditionally used quinoa as a compress for bruises, as a diuretic, and as a means to induce vomiting. They also allegedly knew how to prepare it to help them deal with liver and urinary tract problems, tuberculosis, appendicitis, and altitude and motion sickness.

But this food, which has been so important for nutrition and culture, was almost lost. When the Spaniards arrived in the Inca homeland they destroyed quinoa crops and forced farmers to grow corn. This was a horrendous act by



the invaders and was one of the many ways they tried to destroy the Inca culture. However, they weren't completely successful in their goal and high up in the mountains some quinoa crops survived.

The Spaniards couldn't get rid of quinoa, but for years the food was culturally shunned. It was seen as a "poor person's food" and it wasn't really until the 1970s that the beauty of quinoa was recognized once again. This time quinoa gained global attention. The nutritional quality of quinoa is the main reason why people know about this superfood today and also why NASA placed it high on its list of possible foods for long-duration manned spaceflights.



Native american woman
in a quinoa field

So, what does quinoa have going for it nutritionally? The major appeal of quinoa is that it's a complete protein, which means that it includes all 9 of the essential amino acids. It is also incredibly rich in fiber (it actually contains twice the fiber of grains), vitamins B and E, and other minerals like iron, magnesium, calcium, and potassium. It is naturally gluten-free and has a low glycemic index. Scientific studies have supported the idea that quinoa can help with some health ailments. Higher levels of magnesium and riboflavin, for example, have been shown to help with migraines and atherosclerosis because these nutrients help relax blood vessels and improve energy production within cells.

If you know how to cook quinoa, it really is a great option for many people! This is where the story differs depending on where you live in the world. Although quinoa has often been promoted as the “rice of the Incas” around the world, Andean people have traditionally been more inclined to use it in a different way. The indigenous peoples of the Andes region often see quinoa as a “heavy” food and so they have been more likely to use it to thicken soups or drinks, or sometimes to make biscuits.

With this in mind, I'm providing two easy options for quinoa recipes here. The first is how you may have eaten quinoa before – as a rice replacement – and the second is a recipe for a simple quinoa soup, inspired by the Inca culture and the ingredients they would have had available. ■

COOKED QUINOA

INGREDIENTS

1 Part (e.g. 1 cup) Quinoa

2 Parts (e.g. 2 cups) Water

METHOD

Rinse the quinoa in a fine mesh colander under running water for a minute or two. Drain well.

Combine the rinsed quinoa and water in an uncovered saucepan. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, then decrease the heat to a gentle simmer.

Cook until the quinoa has absorbed all of the water, about 10 to 20 minutes (small amounts of quinoa will be ready closer to 10 minutes; larger amounts between 15 to 20 minutes).

Remove the pot from heat, cover, and let the quinoa steam for 5 minutes, then fluff the quinoa with a fork.



NOTES:



In the Andean region, most of the traditional varieties of quinoa are bitter and need to be hulled, washed, and/or roasted before they are cooked. Commercially available quinoa has generally been processed to remove that bitter coating, however, it's best to thoroughly rinse your quinoa under running water for a minute or two before using, to remove all traces of residue. Or, for a richer flavor, toast your quinoa in a dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly for about 4-5 minutes. This will give it a nice nutty flavor.

You will end up with three times as much cooked quinoa as you begin with.

Leftover quinoa keeps well in the refrigerator for 4-5 days. Make sure it has cooled to room temperature before covering and chilling.

A SIMPLE, INCA-INSPIRED QUINOA SOUP

INGREDIENTS

1 Cup Cooked Quinoa

4 Cups Vegetable or Meat Broth (the Inca may have made alpaca broth or perhaps included the animal's meat in a quinoa soup or stew, but we'll opt for something more readily available and appealing to today's palates!)

2-3 Medium-sized Tomatoes, diced

1 Pinch Chili Pepper, dried, or 1 Sliver Chili Pepper, fresh (to taste)

15 oz. Can of Beans, drained and rinsed (kidney, lima, etc.)

½ Cup Maize (or sweet corn, if white corn is not available)

METHOD

Put all the ingredients into a pot. Bring the soup to a boil over medium heat and then lower the heat to simmer for 25 minutes.

Serve and enjoy! **Alli mikuna!**



What Did the Inca Eat?

Quinoa

Chili peppers

Maize

Beans

Manioc (cassava, yuca, yucca)

Oca (root vegetable)

Potatoes (over 200 varieties)

Tomatoes

Zapallo (a type of pumpkin)

Fruits and berries

Nuts (peanuts, a type of Andean walnut, and the nut of the Quito palm)

Alpaca and Guanaco (types of camelids. Dried strips of meat, jerky, from these animals was called *charqui*)

Birds

Deer (for the royals)

Ducks (for the emperor and his family)

Frogs

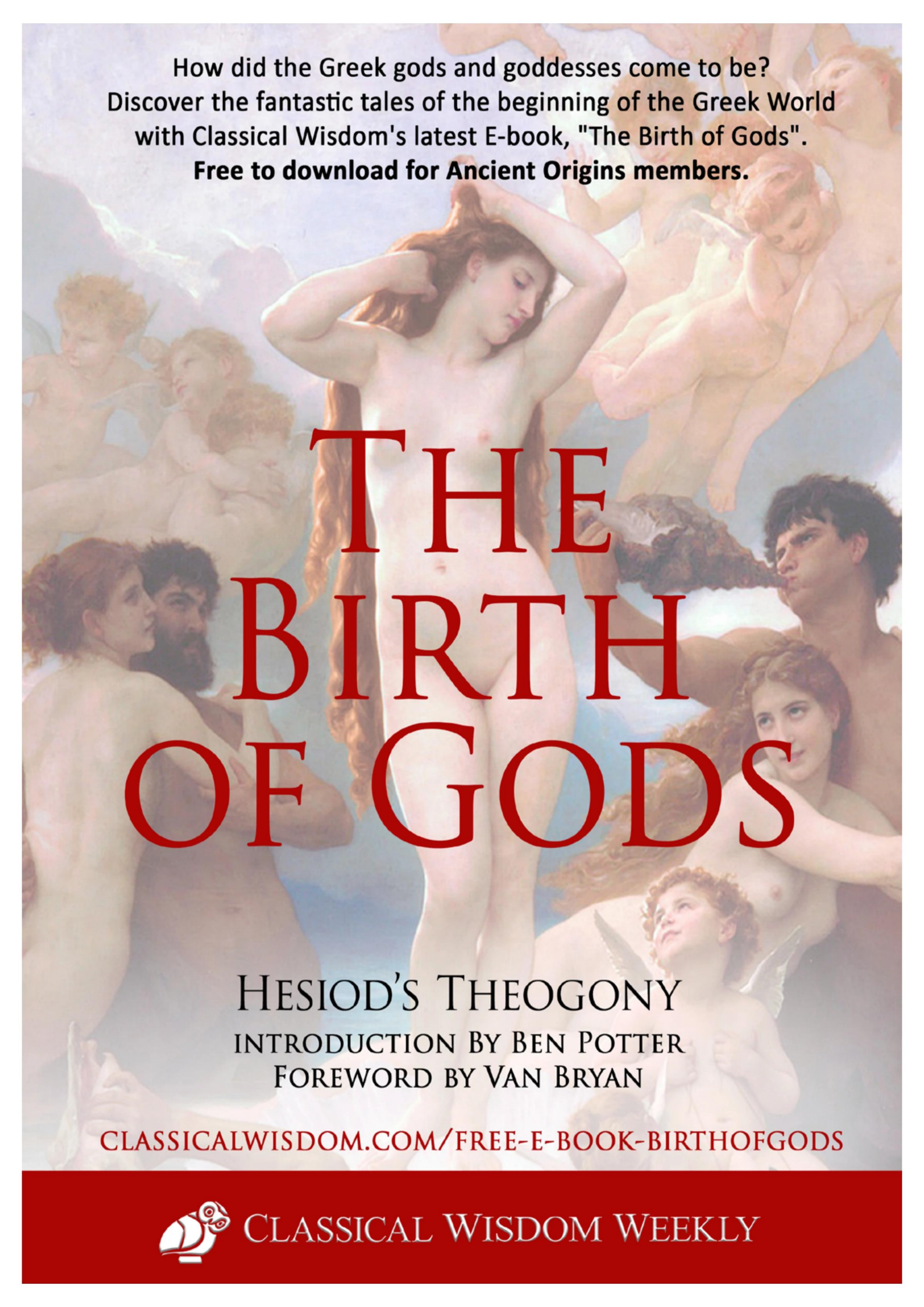
Cuy (Guinea pigs)

Viscacha (a rodent similar to chinchillas)

Insects (caterpillars, beetles, ants, and mayfly larvae)

Fish, penguins, small sharks, and mussels



The background of the entire page is a reproduction of Sandro Botticelli's painting 'The Birth of Venus'. It depicts the goddess Venus standing nude in the center, holding her hair, with Cupid and other figures surrounding her in a dreamlike, ethereal setting.

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